

DEMOCRATS' LEADING LADY ■ NORTH KOREAN NUKE PERIL

DECEMBER 2, 2002 • \$3.00

The American Conservative

**"I Am Not
for World
Empire"**

NORMAN MAILER
on Iraq, Israel, and why
he is a Left-Conservative



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

www.amconmag.com



*What steps should the
U.S. take against Iraq?*

*How do we balance
liberty and security?*

*Does school choice
save public schools?*

Tackle these issues and more with over 90 organizations and 1.5 million readers – at Town Hall (www.townhall.com/thoughts).

Town Hall brings together Internet users, public policy organizations, candidates, congressional staff, and political activists to learn about and then discuss conservative thoughts. Town Hall is committed to inform, educate and empower the public online.

Visit Town Hall today to get news and information, read the latest syndicated columns, sign up for news alerts, and exchange your ideas on today's hot issues.

www.townhall.com/thoughts

townhall .com

CONSERVATIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

December 2, 2002 / Vol. 1, No. 5



PETER KEEN

[COVER]

"I Am Not For World Empire"

A conversation with Norman Mailer about Iraq, Israel, and what it means to be a Left-Conservative. **Page 8**

[WORLD]

North Korean Bombshell

BY ERIC S. MARGOLIS Pyongyang's announcement reveals a real threat poised for aggression. **Page 19**

[BELTWAY]

The Return of Team B

BY MARTIN SIEFF The neocon war push includes cooking intelligence estimates. **Page 21**

[MEDIA]

Sin of Omission

BY MARK GAUVREAU JUDGE The Washington press ignores a conservative protest in its own backyard. **Page 23**

COVER PHOTO: UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

COLUMNS

7 Patrick J. Buchanan: Time for ungrateful allies to look to their own defense.

30 Taki: The poor little Greek boy as a struggling journalist in Paris.

VIEWS

4 Fourteen Days: The Democrats' Party Girl; Sharon Maps America's Post-Iraq War Plan; A Good Omen from the Senate

24 George Szamuely: Thomas Friedman, dean of liberal imperialism

ARTS & LETTERS

26 Steve Sailer: Yet again, Hollywood celebrates a Stalinist.

27 Paul Gottfried: If Judis and Teixeira's analysis proves right, 2002 may be the Republicans' last winning election.

28 E.F. Ulmann: Christopher Buckley revives the lost art of satire.

[POLITICS]

NANCY PELOSI, PARTY GIRL

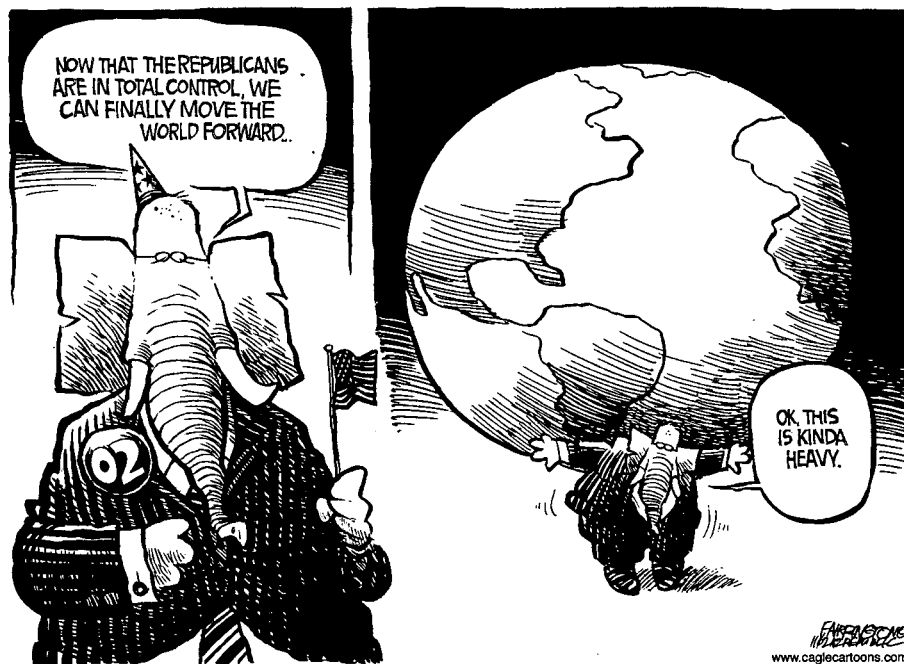
The prospective House Democratic leader has always been a party girl, a loyal and hardworking Democrat, born to the rough-and-tumble of politics.

Her father, Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., served five terms in Congress and wound up mayor of Baltimore. Nancy moved to San Francisco with her husband, Paul, a real estate broker, and, while raising five kids, plunged into local Democratic party politics—which, back in the 1970s, meant faithfully serving the all-powerful Burton Machine, headed by the late Congressman Phil Burton.

In 1987, as Phil's wife and political heir lay on her deathbed, she anointed Pelosi her successor. Eight terms later, Pelosi has risen to the top of the heap and is now being characterized by Republicans as a typical "San Francisco Democrat." As a longtime San Francisco resident, however, I can tell you Pelosi is far to the Right of her constituents, stylistically as well as ideologically.

Here is a woman who once showed up to a meeting she called to protest "Newt Gingrich's assault on Social Security" in what looked to be a \$10,000 outfit, decked out in gold jewelry that more than equaled the combined annual income of the attendees. It was a pathetic sight to see these scared seniors, in their tattered suits and patched housedresses, shuffling into the meeting hall, while Nancy, resplendent on the stage, explained how the "radical Republicans" were going to "benefit the rich" on their tired old backs.

In 1996, when I ran against her as the Republican sacrificial lamb, she refused to debate. No one can remember her ever debating an opponent, and why should she? A princess does not argue. Instead, she holds forth, addressing her subjects, warning them of the dangers



ahead, vowing to protect them, and all the while reminding them of her beneficence.

The only way I could get a word in edgewise was to confront her at one of her yearly district meetings. As she stood up there, dressed to the nines, her eyes flitting lightly over the audience—but fixated, it seemed, at a point far in the distance—the impression was one of an overwhelming sense of entitlement. My chance came in the question and answer period, when she finally deigned to call on me. Why, I asked, should the U.S. allow itself to get dragged into a Balkan conflict from which there would be no extrication? She spluttered that Milosevic was committing "genocide," and "isolationism" was not an option.

That was then, but this is now. Pelosi was the only Democratic leader in either House to oppose the president's rush to war in Iraq. In her speech on the House floor, she attacked U.S. war plans as a distraction from the fight against al-Qaeda: "Our work is not done. Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar,

and the other terrorist leaders have not been accounted for." Coming from the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, these words had resonance.

The new leader of the House Democrats is the consummate insider, a tough-minded and very partisan Democrat who will surprise everyone with her moderation. Cynthia McKinney was more a San Francisco Democrat than Pelosi will ever be.

—Justin Raimondo

[WAR]

ALLIES LIKE THESE

Interviewed earlier this month by the *Times* of London, Ariel Sharon expressed his wish that any war America fights in the Mideast not be limited to Iraq. Iran, said Sharon, is the real "center of world terror," and "the day after" U.S. troops finish off Saddam they should turn their guns against Tehran.

Sharon's remarks came at the very moment U.S. officials were pointing to welcome signs of Iranian co-operation

in the war against al-Qaeda. In a broader sense, Iran stands as evidence that the fever of fundamentalist Islam tends to run its course: the same Iranians who railed against "The Great Satan" in 1978 are often those now pushing for more democracy and greater ties to the West. Iran has a vibrant civil society and a younger generation completely fed up with rule by the mullahs.

Apparently not enough for Sharon. The Israeli prime minister's calculation seems to be that any Middle Eastern country that might one day develop an arsenal matching Israel's is a fit American military target. If Sharon and the American Likudniks beating the same drum get their way, U.S. troops will be fighting wars in the Middle East for countless years to come.

[IMMIGRATION] **A GOOD OMEN FROM THE SENATE**

We will be watching to see whether the GOP's impressive midterm election performance will bring about a more realistic attitude towards border control. A propitious straw in the wind was a post-election radio interview future Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott gave to Bill O'Reilly:

O'Reilly: Why not back up the Border Patrol with the military, whether it's National Guard or straight troops?

Lott: Well, I think we should do it. And I would be for...

O'Reilly: Do you really?

Lott: Oh, absolutely.

O'Reilly: You're the first politician I've heard...

Lott: Look, most politicians run around worried about civil libertari-

ans and being sued by the ACLU. This is not only a porous border in terms of illegal aliens. It's also a porous border in terms of crime and drugs.

Putting troops on the border will not, by itself, get illegal immigration under control. Serious interior enforcement and punishment of companies that recruit and exploit illegal aliens are required as well. But in view of recent GOP pandering to Mexico's *Presidente* Fox and various Latino advocacy groups, Lott's assertions mark a refreshing change.

[TAXES] **THE TEA PARTY SPIRIT**

Of the Massachusetts ballot initiatives, Question 2 made all the noise. In that famously left-wing state, Ron Unz proposed, and won, a ban on bilingual education. This result was certainly encouraging, although—his failure in Colorado notwithstanding—Unz's popular victories against this multicultural scourge have ceased to surprise. Even more remarkable, if less noticed, was Question 1, a seemingly quixotic proposal to abolish the Massachusetts personal income tax. Such an idea wouldn't stand a chance in Ted Kennedy's backyard, right? The state sardonically nicknamed "Taxachusetts"—and guided by the cadres of the People's Republic of Cambridge—should be the last place to let the people keep their money.

Predictably, the *Boston Globe* and the politicians condemned the question to failure, and fail it did. But not by much. The Nays had it, but only by the slim, single-digit margin of 54-46 percent. Tax abolitionists should take heart in this moral victory. If they can come within eight points in Massachusetts, success elsewhere is undeniably realistic. Conservatives across the country should get to work. ■

The American Conservative

Editors

Patrick J. Buchanan
Taki Theodoracopulos

Executive Editor

Scott McConnell

Managing Editor

Kara Hopkins

Assistant Editor

Matthew Alexander

Art Director

Mark Graef

Office Manager

Veronica Yanos

Publishing Consultants

Ronald E. Burr
Angelo Matera

Advertising Manager

Peter Lenahan

Newsstand Consultant

Rande Davis

The American Conservative, Issue 5, Vol. 1, December 2, 2002 (ISSN 1540-966X) is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for double issues in January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 120, Arlington VA, 22209. (703) 875-7600. Periodicals postage pending at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 10829, Riverton, NJ 08076-0829.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$69.97 other foreign (U.S. funds). Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds). For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries—by mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 10829, Riverton, NJ 08076-0829. By phone: 1-800-579-6148 (outside the U.S./Canada call 1-856-786-9042). Via the web: www.amconmag.com. When ordering a subscription please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue and all subscription transactions. This issue went to press on November 14, 2002. Inquiries to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com.

PARANOID PRAISE

As an unabashed liberal, a subscriber to the *Nation*, and a concerned and patriotic citizen of the United States, I want to thank you for launching *The American Conservative*.

Although I still disagree with many of the positions that the conservative movement represents, I am glad that there is a clear voice for the real conservative movement today, and I am delighted to have it available to read on the Internet. I could never subscribe unless it was delivered to my home in brown paper wrapping, and I hope no one ever goes through my computer and sees how many times I have logged on to the site now listed in my favorites. Best of luck in this endeavor and keep up the good fight. Barry Goldwater is smiling on you from his own seat in the heavens.

PAT FOLTZ
via email

PAIN IS GOOD

I have one disagreement with Roger McGrath's excellent article about the horrors of Somali Bantu "refugees" flooding into Lewiston, Maine. Mr. McGrath states that he takes no comfort in having California's immigration problems spread to other regions of America. I, on the other hand, strongly believe America will have no chance for real, immigration reform until Americans in every state and in every social and political class (including the Republican establishment) suffer some personal pain from immigration.

Most people do not like pain. But, pain serves as a good warning system. Put your finger on a hot stove and pain sharply tells you to take your finger off the stove.

Sure, many of us hope that America's political, business, and religious leaders will change their views about immigration by reading a great article in *The*

American Conservative or by reading persuasive books on the subject by Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Brimelow, or Ms. Malkin. Unfortunately, it doesn't appear that comfortable, country club Republicans are strongly motivated by reading books.

No, our only hope is to see that influential Americans experience some personal pain from immigration. Let the Somali Bantus, tuberculosis-infected Central Americans, AIDS-infected Haitians, or infidel-hating Pakistanis move in large, threatening numbers to places like Kennebunkport, Maine, Midland, Texas, or the Chicago North Shore. Perhaps we can put up a Third World refugee tent city at the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Ga.

JOHN ELLIS
Chicago, IL

TRUTH IN LABELING

Fred Reed's article ("They Paved Paradise") was a welcome one, in that it reflected a genuine conservative commitment to conservation, stewardship, and wise management of natural resources, but there were very important aspects missing from Mr. Reed's discussion of environmental politics.

Mr. Reed made an unfortunate reference to the "far Right," which meant for him advocates of social Darwinism and perhaps also "creative destruction" and other idols of neo-liberalism favored over at the *Wall Street Journal*. But, as *AC* and its readers must be only too aware, the label "far Right" is used so loosely, so pejoratively and imprecisely by American and European leftists that it can mean whatever the author wants it to mean at that moment. The label is so often directed at traditional conservatives, such as Mr. Buchanan, that it is confusing at best for a conservative to fling it at someone else to score rhetorical points.

At the risk of quibbling over semantics, traditional conservatives are the extreme Right (for which there should

be no apology) in their defense of personality, faith, family, custom, and local community against the destructive Leviathans of "turbo-capitalism" and statism. Perhaps the antiquated political spectrum of Left and Right is inadequate to reflect this, but the pavers and regulators alike seem to share a love for the grossly material, the colossal, the consolidated and the centralized that is quite alien to conservatives. In that sense, I would place the social Darwinians in the middle or the opposite side of the spectrum from us, as they are clearly committed to different forms of dehumanized and deracinated life in stark opposition to conservatism.

DANIEL LARISON
Albuquerque, NM

WANDERING OFF

Paul Schroeder's case against preemptive war with Iraq illustrates the importance of a journal like *The American Conservative*. Schroeder's apparent support for the 1991 Persian Gulf War and for keeping NATO even after the Soviet dissolution, and his incredible view that the 1956 Israeli preemptive attack on Egypt—sharply condemned by the Eisenhower Administration—was justified shows Schroeder is a neoconservative. By running his brilliant essay, *The American Conservative* shows itself to be more than a forum for dialog within paleoconservatism but also an outlet for neoconservatives and others who, compelled by principle in a particular instance, wander off the reservation.

DINO JOSEPH DRUDI
Washington, D.C.

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit letters by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.

Come Home, America

During what we call the "C" segment on our MSNBC daily show, Bill Press and I were debating Canada's decision to issue a travel warning to all Canadians

thinking of visiting the United States.

Seems a Syrian-born Canadian citizen, flying home via JFK, was interrogated by U.S. officials, finger-printed, photographed—and sent back to Damascus. This was in line with a new U.S. policy that singles out travelers from five nations—Syria, Libya, Sudan, Iran, Iraq—that have a history of harboring terrorists.

Press took Canada's side, accusing the Bushites of ethnic profiling. I replied that the insult came from a country that freeloards off U.S. defense and is itself a haven for terrorists. *Final bon mot*: We Americans don't "need lectures from Soviet Canuckistan."

That set the cat down among the pigeons. Before the show ended, correspondents for Canadian press and TV were in the lobby. Some of my interviewers agreed with me. Others bristled with controlled rage. Yet, the Canuckistan crack aside, is it not time our whining and carping allies heard what some of us think of them?

Was I wrong about Canada? Here is Diane Francis, columnist for the *National Post*: "Canada's immigration, refugee and legal system facilitates the entry into the continent of ... terrorists." Here is U.S. anti-terrorism expert Buck Revell: "Unless and until Canada can tighten its controls on immigration and refugees, these controls will have to be imposed at the [U.S.] border..."

As for Canada's military, *The American Enterprise*, the magazine of AEI, writes: "Canadian military spending stands at \$265 per capita — the worst among the NATO members." Her

defense effort is not half the NATO average and but a fourth of the U.S. effort. Canada is exactly what I said it was: a free rider on the U.S. defense budget.

With only 34 ships in a navy that boasted 300 in World War II (only 12 are up to U.S. standards), Canada has "stopped air and sea patrols around its coastline, the world's longest ... Smugglers already run rampant, and terrorists can't be stopped," writes *TAE*.

"We have sovereignty over the Arctic areas only by the grace of other nations," says Canadian defense critic Rob Anders.

And though we let Canada devalue its dollar and run up \$50 billion trade surpluses at the expense of our timber men and farmers, we still hear the endless belly-aching from up north.

TAE's December issue debates a parallel deepening divide between the U.S. and Europe. Writes editor Karl Zinsmeister: "The simple reality needs to be faced squarely by Americans: In a great variety of ways — Americans and Europeans are growing apart."

The three "critical structural breaks" in Zinsmeister's view: The U.S. is dynamic, Europe is dying, and Europeans have lost the stomach for military action. When FDR called welfare a "narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit," it applied to nations as well as men. Ike was right: We should have pulled our troops out in 1961. Europe might today be standing on her own feet with her own robust continental defense, not mooching off America and behaving with the sneering resentment of a 40-year-old still living under his old man's roof.

While the writers in Zinsmeister's symposium are, almost all of them, neo-conservatives, they sound like Sam Francis and Charley Reese.

"Old and in the Way" is Zinsmeister's own title. "Irrational Anti-Americanism Takes Root Across the Atlantic," "Good-bye Europe," "A One-Sided Alliance," "Irritating and Irrelevant," "The Real Problem is European Elites," are the titles of the other essays. Only pro-American Brit John O'Sullivan offers relief from the remorseless Euro-bashing.

Yet, when one reads on the eve of an Armistice Day that recalls the Doughboys who died rescuing Europe in World War I, that 500,000 marched through Florence in a parade that featured "communist hymns, red flags and portraits of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara," perhaps we can now all agree: It is time we came home.

Whatever one may think of war with Iraq, George Bush is not Hitler, and America is not the Third Reich. We don't need this. We don't need these people. Now that the Cold War is over, let us graciously cede NATO to the Europeans, bring our boys home, let Europeans provide for their own defense, and go our separate way in the world. If they don't like us, fine. Our forefathers didn't much like them either.

Rising anti-Americanism in Canada and Europe testifies anew to the wisdom of our founding fathers. "It is our true policy to steer clear of any permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world," said George Washington. Echoed Jefferson: Our policy should be "peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

Amen. Even the neocons seem to be getting the message. ■

[genius and zest]

“I Am Not For World Empire”

A conversation with Norman Mailer about Iraq, Israel, the perils of technology and why he is a Left-Conservative.

On a crystalline day in October, Taki, Kara Hopkins, and Scott McConnell met at Logan Airport and drove up the Cape to Norman Mailer's home in Provincetown, Mass. Taki is an old friend of Mailer's; McConnell and Hopkins knew his writing well but had never met the man.

The vagaries of literary reputation are not the main beat of The American Conservative, but we were struck by how many people told us how important Mailer was at a certain time of life and how invariably that time was young adulthood—somewhere between 18 and 21. Perhaps that is the moment in life when readers are most receptive to a certain kind of bold writing.

What follows is a conversation about what most interested the four of us on that day, as well as an addendum Mailer wrote later. We spoke of the present and future more than the past: a mixture of politics (Iraq, the imperial urge, styles of conservatism) and more typically Maileresque

themes (the problem of technology). After several hours of talk and the gracious hospitality of Norris Church Mailer we made our way back to normal life, not doubting that we had spent an extraordinary afternoon with the greatest living American writer.

AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE: You're just back from Europe...

NORMAN MAILER: My wife, Norris, and I went with George Plimpton and his wife Sarah. We did George's play, *Zelda, Scott & Earnest* (Terry Quinn, co-author) in six capitals over two visits.

We were in Paris and Amsterdam in June, then at end of summer, in Vienna and Berlin and Moscow and London. It is the most amazing play. There is not one original word in it. It is all taken from Scott's writings, Zelda's writings, and Hemingway's, plus their letters back and forth. The first time we did it, I said to John Irving, "Can you imagine how

good this will be with top-flight actors?" He said, no, no, no. The fact that you people are doing it makes it interesting because sitting in the audience, you go back and forth between the originals and the people who are doing it on this night.

I think that is a part of it. Americans need mythos, certainly, in the literary world. Nationally, we have Abraham Lincoln and George Washington and FDR and Camelot, and in some quarters I fear there is Ronald Reagan, but nonetheless, in the literary world, it is probably Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Zelda, the nearest thing to a literary mythos within living reach. People take to it.

AC: Why do you think so? Because they are good, but not necessarily the best.

NM: Hemingway and Fitzgerald? Well, they are arguably the best. Who would you call on in that period? Going back, you could certainly argue that Melville's



a greater writer or Emerson or a few others. But who would you name for now?

AC: I would put Henry Miller there with them.

NM: Yes, Henry Miller I would put there. Maybe a century from now, people will decide he was greater. But a myth doesn't depend on who is greatest. It needs figures who are extremely well known and yet not quite understood. That lends itself to myth. Why we need mythos may be the real question. I would assume it is the counter-weight to technology.

AC: Technology has been a theme you've written and spoken about for 50

years. Do you think in terms of sensory deadening or soul deadening, that the impact is much worse now than 40 or 50 years ago? I am not sure whether you do the Internet and all that...

NM: I don't. That would use up what I have left. Not long ago, I said that what technology promises is less pleasure and more power. Part of the crisis of modern times is that there is a tendency for all of us to become more and more narcissistic and power-driven. (And icy within.)

AC: Are you gloomy about the looming power of the state, of American totalitarianism? You've said you've been wrong about that many times and have been cheerful about having been wrong.

NM: I am more worried this time than ever. Did you see a piece in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, a marvelous piece by a man named Jay Bookman? If you want to talk about Iraq, I'm ready to get into that.

AC: Our little magazine has been talking a lot about Iraq.

NM: I, too, am not for going to war, so we certainly meet there. What I thought from the beginning is that there is a most peculiar subtext under the Bush administration's approach on what has to be done with Iraq. Some time ago, they began by suggesting that Iraq was an immediate nuclear threat. It is now generally agreed that they are not. The Bush people then began to carry on

about the huge danger of a biochemical assault on us. But they've not made the case that Iraq is on the ready for such a dire possibility. Then, another big accusation—Iraq is a harbor for terrorists. Well, as far as I can see, and this is from a novelist's point of view, if I were Saddam Hussein, the last people I would want to have in my country are terrorists from other countries because I am interested in total control over my own land. Terrorists are loose cannons. Why would Hussein want to pay an unforeseen price? Then, on the other hand, if I were a terrorist, going along the underground railway that I assume runs from Pakistan through Iran and has to pass through Iraq to get to Syria and Jordan and Lebanon and Palestine, the worst place on this trip would be Iraq because I'd probably be put in a compound. So what is the subtext? Why does the White House want to have that war, why? What do they want? One can name access to oil as the motive, but is that a large enough reward for what could be the unforeseen and immense dangers of such a war?

Then I saw that piece in the *Journal-Constitution*, printed on Sept. 29, a piece to which no attention was paid in

means we are inaugurating the commencement of the American World Empire. Right there is the subtext. Incidentally, the political seat from which I speak is as a Left-Conservative.

AC: It was much more clean when you were an anarchist. We knew what that meant. But Left-Conservative?

NM: I have to redefine the term for myself every day because on its face, we have an oxymoron. But, it does have meaning for me. I think there are elements in the remains of left-wing philosophy (which has not had all that many new ideas for the last 30 years), that are worth maintaining.

AC: Such as?

NM: The idea that a very rich man should not make 4,000 times as much in a year as a poor man. On the other hand, I am not a liberal. The notion that man is a rational creature who arrives at reasonable solutions to knotty problems is much in doubt as far as I'm concerned. Liberalism depends all too much on having an optimistic view of human nature. But the history of the 20th century has

aspects—but I do believe there is a Creator who is active in human affairs and is endangered. I also believe there is a Devil who is equally active in our existence (and is all too often successful). So, I can hardly be a liberal. God is bad enough for them, but talk about the devil, and the liberal's mind is blown. He is consorting with a fellow who is irrational if not insane. That is the end of real conversation.

On the other hand, conservatism has its own deep ditches, its unclimbable walls, its immutable old ideas sealed in concrete. But lately, there are two profoundly different kinds of conservatives emerging, as different in their way as the communists and the socialists were before and after 1917, yes, two types of conservatives in America now. What I call "value conservatives" because they believe in what most people think of as the standard conservative values—family, home, faith, hard work, duty, allegiance—dependable human virtues. And then there are what I call "flag conservatives," of whom obviously the present administration would be the perfect example.

I don't think flag conservatives give a real damn about conservative values. They use the words. They certainly use the flag. They love words like "evil." One of Bush's worst faults in rhetoric (to dip into that cornucopia) is to use the word "evil" as if it were a button he can touch to increase his power. When people are sick and have an IV tube put in them to feed a narcotic painkiller on demand, a few keep pressing that button. Bush uses *evil* as his hot button for the American public. Any man who can employ that word 15 times in five minutes is not a conservative. Not a value conservative. A flag conservative is another matter. They rely on manipulation. What they want is power. They believe in America. That they do. They believe this country is the only hope of the world

ONE OF **BUSH'S WORST FAULTS** IN RHETORIC (TO DIP INTO THAT CORNUCOPIA) IS TO USE THE WORD "**EVIL**" AS IF IT WERE A **BUTTON HE CAN TOUCH** TO **INCREASE HIS POWER**.

American newspapers. I was surprised by that. It is a powerful piece. Bookman remarks that everybody has been asking, why is there no plan for what is to be done in Iraq after the war is won? Bookman's firm suggestion is that there has been a plan all the time. We are going to occupy Iraq and occupy it for a long time. Then it all does begin to make its own kind of sense. Because that

not exactly fortified that notion. Moreover, liberalism also depends too much upon reason rather than any appreciation of mystery. If you start to talk about God with the average good liberal, he looks at you as if you are more than a little off. In that sense, since I happen to be—I hate to use the word religious, there are so many heavy dull connotations, so many pious self-seeking

and they feel that this country is becoming more and more powerful on the one hand, but on the other, is rapidly growing more dissolute. And so the only solution for it is empire, World Empire. Behind the whole thing in Iraq is the desire to have a huge military presence in the near-East as a stepping stone for eventually taking over the world. Once we become a twenty-first century version of the old Roman Empire, then moral reform will come into the picture. The military is obviously more puritanical than the entertainment media. Soldiers can, of course, be wilder than anyone, but the overhead command is a major pressure on soldiers, and it is not permissive.

AC: Who in American politics is a value conservative?

NM: Someone like Taft would be a good example of a value conservative. Eisenhower, probably, a gentle value conservative. More recently? Reagan, I think, was not. I will say that I don't think Reagan ever had an original idea in his life. I once sat next to him, as near as I am sitting to you, at a lunch for eight people. This was in 1972 at the convention that nominated Nixon for the second time. I spent the entire meal trying to figure out a tough question to ask him. I always found that if you meet someone's eyes, a good question can come to mind. And for two hours he sat there, perfectly calm and pleasant and kept making jokes and talking. It was a lightweight conversation. The physical impression of him was that he had about as much human specific density as, let's say, a sales manager for a medium-sized corporation in the Midwest. That kind of modest, mild, well-knit heft was in his bearing. During those two hours, he chatted with all six *Time* reporters at the table, and his eyes never met mine. I found myself unable



PETRA LUVOSCHEK

to come up with that tough question as a result. It became a matter of decorum. The mood was too genial. It occurred to me after he became president that he probably, if he could help it, never spent time talking to anyone who was of no use to him. An instinctive climber who scaled the face of success with great skill: that was his gift, if you will. He was surrounded by people who had many powerful ideas and who illumined him to the point where they could wind him up and then he could do his special stuff. At the time, he had an enormous impact on value conservatives because they thought he was one of them. I suspect he had about as much to do with them as a screen star does with an agricultural laborer.

AC: Returning to the question of empire...

NM: One of the most interesting remarks in the *Journal-Constitution* piece was that after this excellent explanation of what the subtext probably is, Bookman wrote that if it is true that America is going towards empire, that

should be made public to the American people. Let them, at least, have some say on that because it is one of the largest issues we face in the future. I agree wholly with that.

You see, behind flag conservatism is not madness but logic. I'm not in accord with the logic. But it is powerful. From their point of view, America is getting rotten. The entertainment media are loose. They are licentious. The kids are getting to the point where they can't read, but they sure can screw. Morals are vanishing. The real subtext may be that if America becomes again a military machine that is huge in order to oversee all its new commitments, then American sexual freedom, willy-nilly, will have to go on the back burner. Commitment and dedication will become necessary national values (with all the hypocrisy attendant on that.) Flag conservatives may see all this as absolutely necessary. In the last decade, there have been many blows to the psychic integument of conservatism. And the last half-year has been horrific. We have all had to recognize the outsize chicanery and economic pollution of the corporations, we have

had to deal with the great blow the Catholic Church took, not to mention 9/11, which was a shock, if not an outright chasm at our feet. I think Americans took a hit that is not wholly out of proportion to what happened to the Germans after World War I when inflation came and wiped out the fundamental German notion of self, which was that if you worked hard and saved your money, you ended up having a decent old age. It is my belief Hitler could never have come to power ten years later without that runaway inflation. By the same measure, I think 9/11 did something comparable to the American sense of security.

AC: What would the empire builders have done with out 9/11?

NM: I don't think they would have proceeded this way at all. There is such a thing as luck in human affairs. Without 9/11, I don't think they could have exploited this push to have a war with Iraq. I think, rather, the administration would have been in trouble. The attention of the media was fixed on the bad market, the increase in joblessness, the Church and corporate scandals, the high school serial killers, the drugs, new and old.

AC: Do you think we may be in al Qaeda's script or Osama bin Laden's script? Is there really a war of civilizations, which will, if it starts in earnest, not bode well for American globalism?

NM: I think there is a good deal of reality to this. From a radical Muslim point of view, America is absolutely the Great Satan, and this is a war to the death. But in terms of military realities, I don't think it is necessary for us to build an empire to be able to contain Muslim rage. For one thing, apart from anything else, it would take Islamic extremists, what? A hundred years to overthrow us?

Systematic terrorism for 100 years?

Fifty years? Their all-out rage is not likely to last that long.

Historic moods shift. Temperaments grow old. The point I want to make is that—let me do it in two parts: First, there was a fierce point of view back when the Soviet Union fell. Flag conservatives felt that was their opportunity to take over the world because we were the only people who knew how to run the world. And they were furious when Clinton got in. One of the reasons he was so hated was because he was frustrating what they wanted. That world takeover, so open, so possible from their point of view in 1992, was missed. How that contributed to intense hatred of Clinton! This attitude, I think, grew and deepened and festered through the eight years of the Clinton administration. I don't know if White House principals talk to one another in private about this, but the key element in their present thought, I suspect, is that if America becomes an empire, then of necessity, everything here that needs to be strengthened will be affected positively. By *their* lights! If America grows into the modern equivalent of the Roman Empire, then it will be necessary to rear whole generations who can serve in the military in all parts of the world. It will put a new emphasis again upon education. Americans, who are famous for their inability to speak foreign languages, will suddenly be encouraged and over-encouraged to become linguists in order to handle the overseas tasks of empire. The seriousness of purpose will be back in American life.

These are, I suspect, their arguments. They are not mine. I am not for World Empire. I can foresee endless disasters coming out of that.

What they don't take into account is the exceptional perversity of human affairs. At the least we could become a species of totalitarian country, dominating the world, with very



PETRA LUNOSCHEK

little freedom of speech. Moreover, the entire scheme could fail. The notion itself has an overweening hubris to it.

AC: This could very easily fail—especially if China and Europe were opposed to it.

NM: One of the messages that the flag conservatives are trying to send to China is, I expect: Hear this! You Chinese guys are obviously very bright. We can tell. We know! Because your Asian students in our universities get better marks than our people do. They are more serious. They were born for technology. People who have led submerged lives love technology. They don't get any pleasure anyway, so they do like the notion of personal, right-at-your-desk power. Technology is ideal for them. All right, goes the unspoken message of the flag conservatives, you guys can have your technology, but you had better understand, China, that you will be the Greek slaves to us Romans. We will treat you well because you will be most important to us, eminently important. But don't try to rise above your future station in life. The best you can ever hope to be is Greeks.

There is just this kind of mad-eyed mystique in Americans: the idea that we Americans can do anything. So, say flag conservatives, we will be able to handle what comes. Our know-how, our can-do, will dominate all obstacles. They truly believe America is not only fit to run the world but that it *must* run the world. Otherwise, we will lose ourselves. If there is not a new seriousness in American affairs, the country is going to go down the drain. That, I am fully ready to speculate, is the subtext beneath the Iraqi subtext, and they may not even be wholly aware of it themselves, not all of them.

AC: What now?

NM: I'm not sure anything can be done. I think America is in pretty bad psychic shape. If it really is, then many people may turn to the idea of Empire as a transcendent solution, a way to get rid of our ongoing guilt. I would argue that there has always been a tremendous guilt in our lives, at least as long as I know. I can go right back to my World War II days in the Army. We were all convinced then that when peace came, we'd return home to a depression. We G.I.'s were bitter about that and we enjoyed our bitterness. We were maybe going to lose our lives, but if we got

are supposed to be macho and win. Jesus and Evel Knievel don't necessarily consort too well in one psyche. Nonetheless, we moved forward, we became more and more powerful, even as the guilt developed in all sorts of subterranean ways. The communist Red Scare of the early Fifties, at a time when the Soviet Union was still hugely ravaged by its war wounds, is one example of how we reacted. When 9/11 occurred, there was an immense guilt mixed in with the rage. I was here in Provincetown, 300 miles away at the time, and the reality of it didn't hit me directly, but after a while

THEY TRULY BELIEVE AMERICA IS NOT ONLY FIT TO RUN THE WORLD BUT THAT IT
MUST RUN THE WORLD. OTHERWISE, WE WILL LOSE OURSELVES.

through this, we'd probably go back to depression. Good luck! But after we returned, the country took off on an economic ascent. A lot of Americans were very happy to be prosperous, but they also felt secretly guilty. Why? Because we are a Christian nation. The Judeo in Judeo-Christian is essentially a grace note. We are a Christian nation. And the idea, if you really are a Christian and a great many people in America at that point were significantly devout, was that you were not supposed to be all that rich. God didn't want it. Jesus certainly didn't. You were not supposed to pile up a lot of money. You were supposed to spend your life in reasonably altruistic acts. That was one half of the collective psyche. The other half: Beat everybody you are in a contest with because you've got to win. To a certain extent, and this is a cruel, but possibly an accurate remark, to be an American is to be an oxymoron. On the one hand, you are a good Christian, and on the other, you are viscerally combative. You

I began to perceive part of the key element in it. The terror of that act involved the TV audience all over America. It was as if our TV sets had come alive. For years we've been seeing scenes just like that on the tube and enjoyed them because we were so insulated. A hundredth of our psychic receptivity could enter the box and share the fear while 99% of ourselves felt absolutely safe. Now, suddenly, it was real. Gods and demons were invading the U.S., coming in right off the TV screen. That may account in part for the odd guilt so many felt after 9/11 as if untold divine forces were erupting in fury.

AC: Do you think there is any turning back? Or are we set on this course? Or is there still a chance to turn prudently away from it?

NM: I think if Bush has to turn away from it, he will do so with great frustration. He will have to go back and live with the old dull insolubles again! I

expect the White House feeling still remains that it doesn't matter what the rest of the world thinks or feels. But, *force majeure*, these flag conservatives are now obliged, nonetheless, to acknowledge the fair amount of division in this country and the unhappiness of France, Germany, Russia, not to mention China, Japan, we can keep naming them. It had to get to the White House principals. They might not be able to bring off this first big step. Were they really ready to do it against the feelings of the rest of the world? Some of the administration who had been all for it in the beginning might have begun to waver. Others, I expect, argued that they had to stay on course. Suck it up! No room for weaklings on this ship!

One of my favorite notions about Bush is that although he is not a bright man, he does have what Ernest Hemingway used to call a bull-s**t detector. Like Reagan, he doesn't have ideas of his own, but he does listen to his experts. He has to. They know more than he does. Still, he can probably tell fairly often when they are speaking with true authority and when they are glossing over their own uncertainty. Sometimes an expert has to maintain his or her position, even though inwardly dubious of its authenticity. Perhaps Bush can hear who is speaking with inner conviction on a given occasion and who is not. So he tacks with each yaw in the breeze.

AC: There is a lot being said in most of the journals of the American Right about Islam being an essentially evil religion which somehow we have to vanquish. Speak to your sense of Islam and where the Christian West or post-Christian West is in relationship to it and how that could play out.

NM: Well, to begin with, I would say that flag conservatives are not Christians. They are, at best, militant Chris-

tians, which is, of course, a fatal contradiction in terms. They are a very special piece of work, but they are not Christians. The fundament of Christianity is compassion, and it is usually observed by the silence attendant on its absence. Well, the same anomaly is true of the Muslims. Islam, in theory, is an immensely egalitarian religion. It believes

A HOST OF ARAB LEADERS, WHO DO NOT LOOK UPON THEIR POOR PEOPLE IN ANY WAY AS EQUALS, MAKE UP A PERFECT COUNTERPART TO THE WAY WE LIVE WITH CHRISTIANITY.

everyone is absolutely equal before God. But the reality, no surprise, is something else. A host of Arab leaders, who do not look upon their poor people in any way as equals, make up a perfect counterpart to the way we live with Christianity. We violate Christianity with every breath we take. So do the Muslims violate Islam. Your question, is it a war to the end? I expect it is. We are speaking of war between two essentially unbalanced inauthentic theologies. So, it may prove to be an immense war. A vast conflict of powers is at the core and the motives of both sides are inauthentic which, I expect, makes it worse. The large and unanchored uneasiness I feel about it is that we may not get through this century. We could come apart—piece by piece, disaster after disaster, small and large.

AC: The conflict between communism and capitalism seems so much more sensible and manageable in comparison.

NM: Looking back, it was kind of logical. Capitalism and communism had clear and opposed objectives but neither was ready to destroy the world. Certainly, the more that conflict ebbed

into its conclusion, the less danger was present that the big bang would come.

AC: You have cast the fight as Allah versus moolah—Islam versus money. If ours is indeed a post Christian society in which materialism is the highest good, and it takes a faith to fight a faith, are they not better suited to combat us?

NM: Are they better suited? No, I don't think so. The difficulty I have when I speak about this is I don't know enough about Islam. But it does seem to me, on the face of it, that if we did nothing in terms of attacking them, that might delay such a war for 50 years. The next argument would be, well, can we afford to delay? We can win it now and we might lose it in 50 years. But my notion is that this war is so unbalanced in so many ways, so much power on one side, so much true hatred on the other, so much technology for us, so much potential terrorism on the other. It is not that complicated to be an effective terrorist after all. Pick up the phone, make a call, and disrupt traffic for half a day. The real question is how pervasive can terrorism get, not whether you can wipe it out. There will always be someone left to act as a terrorist. If we try to become an empire, the real question will become whether we are able to live with terrorism at the level that the Israelis, let us say, are living with now. To be an Israeli these days means that you can never make solid plans, and Jewish people love to have such agendas and carry them out. Now, we are already at the edge of not knowing when our children might be in danger.

AC: You have described the neoconservative support for the war as potentially problematic for Israel. Why?

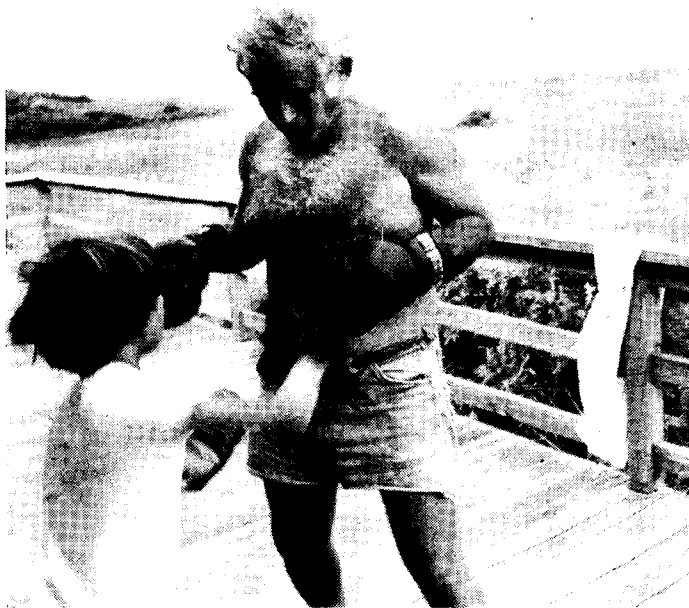
NM: America could win easily over Iraq, but if Saddam has a Samson complex, what would his last act be? Might he hit Israel at the end with everything he's still got? At that point, he is a very dangerous man. Nothing more to lose. He would never dare to attack Israel first. That would certainly destroy him. He wouldn't even dare, I think, to allow terrorists to do it for him because of the obvious reason that it would be too easy to trace it to him. But if Saddam has lost everything, if he is remotely as bad as they paint him—and he may well be—then the likelihood is that he will pull down the columns of the temple: He will be ready to rest as history's super-terrorist. What I don't understand, therefore, is why the Sharon government is so ready to gamble with Israel's ability to defend itself (or be defended) against extreme attack.

AC: Perhaps because they think that if he is allowed to develop nuclear weapons, then Israel will no longer have a nuclear monopoly in the Middle East, and that is potentially risky.

NM: Immensely risky. But at that point, they can both destroy each other. In miniature, it's analogous to the potentiality for instant destruction that America had with the Soviet Union. So, time itself might bring a species of peace. Have they thought it through?

AC: Can we address more generally Israel and its unavoidable existential dilemma, which is the Palestinians? I don't think you've written a lot about Israel...

NM: No. I've never been there. For a basic reason, which is that I am always writing a book. To go to Israel would mean another book to write, and it would be an important book. It would take over all I am doing now, and what I am working on now is more important to me.



AC: But you were never any kind of anti-Zionist...

NM: No, I start with a set of simple, unsophisticated notions about Israel. It was such a small country when it began. If the Arab leaders had had any kind of human goodness in them, they could have said, these people have been through hell. Let's treat them with Islamic courtesy, the way we are supposed to treat strangers. Instead they declared them the enemy. The Israelis had no choice but to become strong and

to get allied with us. In the course of doing so, some of the best aspects of the Jewish nature—irony, the love of truth, the love of wisdom and justice, suffered internal depredations.

The prevailing attitude over the decades demanded that they become good farmers, good technicians, and good soldiers. No need to use the minds for fine-tuning any more. Do not even speak of hearts. Be there when you're needed became the overriding virtue.

Once it was a matter of saving their country, everything changed. Quantity changes quality, which may be the best three words Engels ever wrote. Quantity changes quality. As the Israelis became tougher, so they lost any hard-earned and elevated objectivity, any high and disinterested search for social value. The logo became Israel, my Israel. That was inevitable. It is also tragic, I think. Israel is now one more powerhouse in the world. But what they've lost is special. Now, they treat the Palestinians as if the Palestinians were ghetto Jews. It is one of the great ironies. You know, the older you get, the more you begin to depend upon irony

as the last human element you can rely on. Whatever exists will, sooner or later, be turned inside out.

AC: Do you think there is any way they can escape that dilemma with the Palestinians?

NM: I don't see how. Not right now. It may be that what they feel is that if they don't gamble now, they will be destroyed later. If a war with Iraq ends with Americans installed there, Israel could feel more secure for decades to

come. But it could prove a dangerous support. For a good many powerful Americans, the future question in Empire might become: How much is our support of Israel still to our advantage and how much to our disadvantage? The realpolitikers in the American establishment have to have mixed feelings even now about Israel. The neo-

sionate, but greedy, so I think there is a similar inner crisis in Israel. I think they are ready to say: We are no longer humanists. We've become the opposite of ourselves. Still, we protect the country. We dare the unknown. If Saddam unloads on us? If a large part of Israel is lost to such a war? Well, sometimes one must undergo serious surgery. I think

NM: I haven't thought about it for a very good reason, which is, I don't like thinking about it. There are so many complexities to it and such a collision with so many of my own values. On the one hand, at the time I wrote "The White Negro," I felt that America was very much in need of black culture as such and that black culture had an understanding of life that white culture didn't have. That is how I felt then. Since then I've come to the conclusion that—these remarks are so general, they don't appeal to me—but the collision I have in my mind and am trying to think it through and can't—is that I believe that the integrity of races and cultures is very important. It is something you can't talk about. Hitler took care of race-talk forever. Well, not forever, but for the next 100 years. But I do think that there is such a thing as the integrity of each culture and that cultures ought to be able to go in different directions, even collide. Given the modern world of technology, I am not even sure, however, that the race or culture question is even paramount any more. The long-term tendency is to have no races. It is as if technology has become the dominant culture in existence and may soon be the only real culture. In other words, the similarities between computer experts all over the world is now far greater than their differences in ethnicity.

I BELIEVE THAT THE **INTEGRITY OF RACES AND CULTURES** IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT IS SOMETHING **YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT**. HITLER TOOK CARE OF **RACE-TALK** FOREVER.

cons may feel this is our best shot, this is our best opportunity, this is the moment when we have to take a chance because, if we don't now, we are likely to be doomed 10, 20, 30 years down the road.

But, again, I say, you don't gamble that way. I've always been thoroughly opposed to gambling with your last thousand bucks. Especially if you have a family. That is one reason I am a Left-Conservative. That is the conservative part of me.

AC: What's your opinion of Ariel Sharon?

NM: He is what he is. A brute. A powerhouse general. I think his defense would be: "I am what fate has made me." If he had lived in the ghetto, he would have been one of the stronger men there and probably one of the more disliked. But now he is an Israeli. What is obvious, what stands out in most Israelis is that they are patriots. My God, they are. After Hitler, how could they not be? In that sense, I am sure Sharon thinks he is doing the only thing he can do; that he is doing the right thing. Just as I was going on earlier about Christians having this great guilt that they were not compas-

the Sharons are ready for that. Of course, the neocons here will not be losing their own arm or leg or lungs.

AC: Shifting course a bit, years ago in your writing, you created a kind of antithesis between blacks and whites, writing not about civil rights but about black and white attitudes towards life.

NM: Yes. Black and white with their separate *geist*.

AC: American has become much more complicated now with browns and yellows. Does that lead to any of the sorts of generalizations that came out of "The White Negro"?

NM: You've got to put more of a point on the question.

AC: Our side of the immigration debate generally feels that America is getting transformed into something less like the country we understand and are used to. It seems a kind of foreign place. It is not an argument we often use, but that is in the back of it. Have you thought much about the more multicultural America? What are its possibilities? What are its limitations?

AC: Go back to the integrity of races as very important. I know it is a politically incorrect thought but it doesn't have to be expressed with rancor. It might be interesting.

NM: I don't have any rancor about it, I just have a feeling there is a true problem. To the degree that you lose your culture, you've lost what may be irreplaceable. We can end up with a world that is totally homogenized. Of course, the problem, which was never solved, is

how can these different races and cultures live together with some equity? Democracy has often made vigorous attempts to solve this. But the tendency to homogeneity can go too far. The answer is somewhere in the balance. And the immense difficulty is keeping a viable balance, a lively balance.

Let me put it this way: I don't see immigration as a pressing problem other than that it gets some white people so furious that they can't think about more important things. They feel America is being lost. All right, but America is being lost and has been lost in ways that have nothing to do with races or excessive immigration. America, for one example, is being lost is through television.

Because in advertising, mendacity and manipulation are raised to the level of internal values for the advertisers. Interruption is seen as a necessary concomitant to marketing. It used to be that a 7- or 8-year-old could read consecutively for an hour or two. But they don't do that much any more. The habit has been lost. Every seven to 10 minutes a child is interrupted by a commercial on TV. Kids get used to the idea that their interest is there to be broken into. In consequence, they are no longer able to study as well. Their powers of concentration have been reduced by systematic interruption. Add to that our present-day classrooms. Does anybody ever say that one reason our education is in such a blighted mess is that just about all schools now use fluorescent lights? Why? Because they cost a little less. I would say that in the final count of dollars and cents they cost more. What characterizes fluorescent light is that everybody looks 10 percent plainer than they do under incandescent bulbs. Fluorescent tubes offer an unhappy livid light. Skin looks washed out and a bit sickly. If everybody seems uglier than they are normally, why, then, everyone grows a little depressed. They begin to

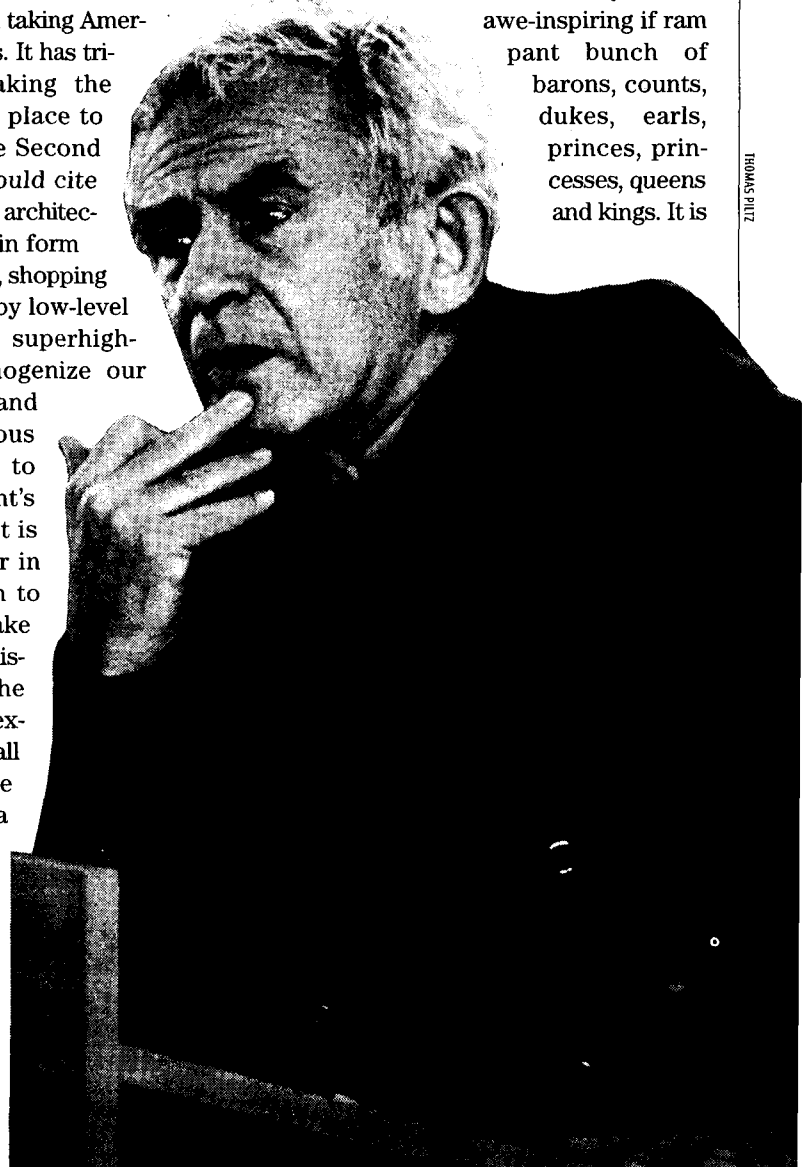
think, what am I doing with all these plain-looking people? Aren't I worth more?

That contributes to the deterioration of the powers of concentration. Bad architecture, invasive marketing, ubiquitous plastic—these deleterious forces bother me much more than immigration.

I could go on about this. Our first problem is not immigration but the American corporation. That is the force which has succeeded in taking America away from us. It has triumphed in making the world an uglier place to live in since the Second World War. I would cite 50-story high-rise architecture as inspired in form as a Kleenex box, shopping malls encircled by low-level condominiums, superhighways that homogenize our landscapes, and plastic, ubiquitous plastic, there to numb an infant's tactile senses. It is the front-runner in the competition to see what can make the world more disagreeable. To the degree we have exported this crud all over the globe, we wield already a punitive species of world hegemony. If I find myself viscerally opposed to the notion of an American Empire, it is because of the all-pervasive aesthetic empti-

ness of the most powerful American corporations. There are no cathedrals left for the poor—only sixteen-story urban renewal housing projects that sit on the soul like jail. Sometimes I am tempted to think that I am not so much a left-conservative as a left-medievalist. I am, of course, not serious about such a term, but we are all medieval in one fashion—our movie stars, musical entertainers, tycoons, and politicians are treated these days as an

awe-inspiring if rampant bunch of barons, counts, dukes, earls, princes, princesses, queens and kings. It is



THOMAS PRITZ

a world we can live in, but let's not forget those medieval ratios of difference in income between rich and poor. I once spent a weekend with a wealthy Swedish publisher who lived near Malmo, and he complained for all of a night how much of his wealth was taken from him by income tax. Before we said goodnight, however, he did remark: "You know —when all is said, I do sleep better because I know that in Sweden we can say at least that no one goes to bed hungry or without a roof over his head." A nice remark. I know that if I were an American making several thousand times more than the poorest man in town, I would not only be afraid of that poor man, but of my relatives and certainly of my enemies, and I would toss at night wondering how to make more money so everyone could recognize that I was the most splendid and exceptional fellow around.

If such a man is not the bane of real conservatives, then I don't know why we are in a dialogue. Once, in the Democratic primary of 1969, I ran for mayor of New York in the hope that a Left-Right coalition could be formed and this Left-Right pincers could make a dent in the entrenched power of the center. The best to be said for that campaign is that it had its charm. I am not so certain, however, that this idea must remain eternally without wings. It may yet take an alchemy of Left and Right to confound the corporate center. Our notion was built on the premise that we did not really know the elements of a good, viable society. We all had our differing

ideals, and morals, and political ethics, but rarely found a way to practice them directly. So, we called for Power to the Neighborhoods. We suggested that New York City become a state itself, the fifty-first. Its citizens would then have the power to create a variety of new neighborhoods, new townships, all built on

separate concepts, core neighborhoods founded on one or another of our cherished notions from the Left or the Right. One could have

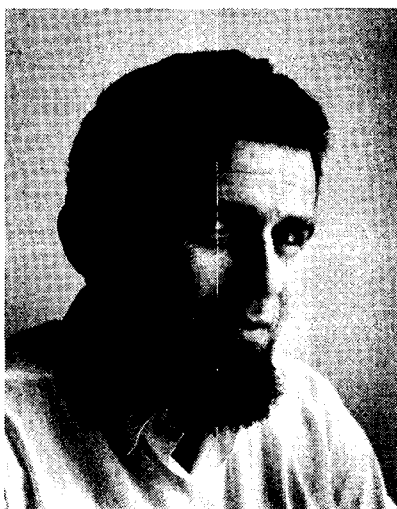
It was a menu for social exploration and experiment. If we had been elected, we might have ended up with everything in an abysmal mess. It was a wicked scheme since we had (just like our flirtation to go to war with Iraq) no real notion of how it would all turn out—which is the essence of the wicked—up the ante and close your eyes while you wait for the turn of the card.

Nonetheless, some germ of the idea of a society open enough for people to live intense social lives still appeals to me. I repeat—we do not really know

what works in a modern society, but the odds against flourishing in a society of the center (given its potentiality to narrow all exits and promote a single central *secure* point of view) may prove to be the least good answer of them all. Until the Left and that part of the Right loyal to its old values can come to recognize that with all their differences, they also have one profound value they might look to protect in common—the vulnerable dignity of the human creation—we are all obliged to travel passively into the vain and surrealistic land of corporate hegemony with its basic notion that democ-

racy is a nutrient to be injected into any country anywhere—a totally oppressive misconception of the delicate promise of democracy which relies on the organic need to grow out of itself and learn from its own human errors.

I see that I have ended by writing a small polemic. It could be said that old polemicists never die. ■



G. MAILLARD KESSLER

egalitarian towns and privileged places, or, for those who did not wish to be bothered with living in so detailed (and demanding) a society, there would be the more familiar and old way of doing things—the City of the State of New York—a government for those who did not care—just like old times.

[nukes but no oil]

North Korean Bombshell

An erratic regime with nuclear-armed missiles poses a more serious threat than hemmed-in Saddam.

By Eric S. Margolis

NEVER TRUST AN AXIS of evil. That is what President Bush recently learned to his chagrin when North Korea stunned the world by admitting it possessed nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

This bombshell from normally secretive Pyongyang enormously embarrassed the Bush administration just as it was gearing up for war against Iraq and caused a furor in Japan and South Korea. The carefully cultivated pretense by Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul that North Korea had no nuclear weapons, and had suspended its nuclear programs nearly a decade earlier, was exposed.

For the Bush administration, North Korea's confession could not have come at a worse time. The main rationale for attacking Iraq advanced by administration hawks has been the alleged mortal danger to America from Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction. In a disgraceful act, the White House withheld the news about North Korea from Congress for 12 days so as not to jeopardize the vote giving Bush *carte blanche* to attack Iraq.

Even though the U.S. admits Iraq does not have any nuclear weapons, it might, claims Washington, be a threat sometime in the future. Iraq's current missile force—some 90-mile ranged tactical missiles and a handful of 220-mile range improved Scuds—certainly does

not and will not ever threaten the United States. But, warns the administration, Iraq might give chemical or biological weapons to anti-American terrorists, no matter that when Iraq had such weapons it never shared them with any other nation or group and no matter that chemical warfare demands tons of toxic material, and biological warfare requires highly sophisticated dispensing systems.

North Korea's revelations now make all these speculative "mights" about Iraq seem chimerical. North Korea now has all the weapons of mass destruction that the most fevered neoconservatives claim Iraq might one day possess. Equally important, Americans and perhaps soon, the continental United States, are in North Korea's nuclear gun sights.

Confronted by North Korea's admission, the wrong-footed President Bush lamely called for "tough negotiations" with North Korea over its nuclear and biowarfare arsenal. The very same Bush who adamantly refuses to negotiate with Iraq over the very same issue. The same Iraq that was an American ally during the 1980s, when Britain and the U.S. covertly supplied Baghdad with the same chemical and biological weapons about which they fulminate today.

Critics of the administration's headlong rush to war were quick to point out

the glaring contradiction in Bush's policy of negotiating with truculent, heavily armed, and highly dangerous North Korea while refusing talks with demolished, impotent Iraq. Surely, when the lives of American soldiers are at risk, negotiations are always preferable to war.

Contradictions and illogic do not seem to trouble much the president who knows good when he see it—such as in the eyes of his new "friend," former KGB officer Vladimir Putin—and evil, as personified by "the guy who tried to kill my dad," Saddam Hussein, the Bush family *bête noire*.

After claiming Iraq had to be invaded because it had ignored the United Nations, a week later the president threatened to ignore the UN if it did not give him a blank check to invade Iraq.

The Korean nuclear imbroglio began in 1993 when U.S. intelligence discovered North Korea was producing plutonium-based nuclear weapons at Yongbyon and developing medium-ranged and intercontinental missiles able to deliver nuclear, chemical, or biological warheads. According to the CIA, North Korea possessed at least two assembled nuclear warheads.

Faced with this nasty news, the Clinton administration threatened war against North Korea if it did not abandon its nuclear program. After the Pen-

tagon warned that full-scale war with the North could cost 250,000 U.S. casualties, Clinton backed down and chose bribery over combat. The U.S., Japan, and South Korea agreed in 1994 to supply penurious North Korea with \$4 billion of oil and food, and two light-water nuclear reactors, in exchange for Pyongyang freezing its nuclear program.

Since then, U.S. and South Korean intelligence has repeatedly warned that North Korea was violating the 1994 agreements by secretly developing enriched uranium and accelerating missile projects. These alarms were ignored.

The Bush administration adopted Clinton's "see-no-evil policy" towards North Korea, continuing the pretense that it posed no threat. When the flow of U.S. aid to North Korea faltered, and delays occurred with the two light water reactors, Pyongyang finally revealed in

North Korea has been steadily expanding its million-man army, which has 4,000 tanks and 12,000 heavy guns or rocket launchers. The North's equipment is obsolete, but its army is tough, aggressive, and dug into fortified positions, caves, and tunnels—including one this writer visited, driven under the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that allowed a full 12,000-man North Korean infantry division to pass in short order under U.S. and South Korean defenses.

North Korea also fields the world's largest commando force: 100,000 crack special forces whose prime mission is to infiltrate South Korea in wartime from the air, land, and sea and deliver suicide assaults against all ten of the vital U.S. and South Korean airbases and headquarters on the peninsula and to strike U.S. air and naval bases in Japan, Okinawa, and even Guam. The North's Scuds and No-dong missiles, armed

American troops stationed in South Korea and quite clearly has the capability to do so.

In short, North Korea—unlike Iraq—has the ability to kill or wound many Americans and, before long, will threaten North America with nuclear-armed missiles. President Bush, however, has dismissed such dangers while continuing to insist Saddam Hussein must be overthrown because he is "a uniquely evil dictator who gassed his own people," (meaning: rebellious Kurds). Bush, however, has nothing to say about his close ally, Israel, which is using American-supplied tanks firing rounds packed with thousands of razor-sharp flechettes, helicopter gunships, fighter bombers, and heavy anti-tank missiles against its "own people," Palestinian civilians, an egregious violation of the U.S. Arms Export Control Act.

North Korea's "Dear Leader," Kim Jong-Il, may not top Bush's roster of evil, but in South Korea and Japan, both now targets of No-dong missiles, he is regarded as extremely dangerous and unstable. With his alarming bouffant hairdo, too-tight khaki jump suit displaying his pot belly, and elevator heels, Kim Jong-Il looks like a hostile alien from outer space in a cheesy Japanese sci-fi film.

Kim's regime has proven more lethal than "evil" Saddam Hussein's. While two million of its people were starving to death, North Korea's army was acquiring new weapons and stockpiling two years worth of food and fuel for war reserves. The Communist Party and military eat well while peasants die of hunger. Tens of thousands of North Koreans languish in prison camps. On another bizarre note, North Korea recently admitted to kidnapping Japanese citizens and staging numerous terrorist attacks against South Korea, including airplane hijackings and bombings.

NORTH KOREA—UNLIKE IRAQ—HAS THE ABILITY TO KILL OR WOUND MANY AMERICANS AND, BEFORE LONG, WILL THREATEN NORTH AMERICA WITH NUCLEAR-ARMED MISSILES.

early-October it was enriching uranium, as well as plutonium, for weapons production. Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul were forced to admit what they had been denying for years: North Korea was nuclear armed and dangerous.

Very dangerous, in fact, and highly unpredictable. By latest estimates, the North has at least 3-5 nuclear warheads. Pyongyang has deployed 500 missiles, including 100 No-dong missiles with a 780-mile range and is developing the Taepo-dong-2 ICBM, which can reach the continental U.S. Many of these missiles can carry nuclear, chemical, or biological warheads. The North is believed to have 5,000 tons of chemical weapons and advanced nerve gases.

with chemical warheads, are also targeted on airbases in South Korea, Japan, and Okinawa. Pentagon war games have shown that if North Korea can quickly neutralize these vital air bases, it can occupy all of South Korea before U.S. reinforcements can arrive.

In addition, 10,000 North Korean heavy guns and rocket launchers along the DMZ are poised to deliver a torrent of conventional explosives, chemicals, and germs down on the 37,000 U.S. troops of the 2nd Infantry Division along the border and on other units further south. Seoul's 10.6 million people are also within range of North Korean artillery. Pyongyang has repeatedly threatened to "burn" Seoul and the

Negotiating with North Korea still remains preferable to a massive war on the Korean Peninsula. Just the specter of a long-dreaded two front war in Iraq and Korea is giving the Pentagon justifiable anxiety. Already over-stretched U.S. forces would be put in an extremely difficult position if Kim Jong-Il decided to attack South Korea while U.S. forces were bogged down in Mesopotamia and the Gulf. Moreover, Kim's nuclear arsenal would trump U.S. threats to respond to such an attack with tactical nuclear weapons.

Which brings us back to the question: why is the U.S. not negotiating a peaceful resolution of the issue of weapons inspection in Iraq, which likely has only some old chemical weapons and a few drums of stale-dated toxins, while negotiating with the 'Dear Leader' who is building nuclear-tipped ICBMs that can reach Washington and says he will never give up his nuclear weapons?

The short answer: oil and Israel. The Bush administration wants Iraq's vast oil reserves, and Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Bush's mentor in matters strategic and Middle Eastern, wants Iraq crushed and fragmented. North Korea has no oil.

As a result, the 'see-no-evil' charade with North Korea will continue. Besides, since Vietnam, the U.S. has preferred to attack small nations with limited military capacity: Grenada, Panama, Libya, Somalia, Haiti, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Pentagon hawks believe they can crush Iraq in a week and occupy it in 30 days. A jolly little war will prove popular and boost Bush into a second term. By contrast, disarming North Korea means a real war against a real foe. ■

Eric S. Margolis is author of War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan and Asia and Contributing Foreign Editor of Sun Media.

The Return of Team B

The Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz clique seeks intelligence assessments that tell them what they want to hear.

By Martin Sieff

THE CONQUEST OF IRAQ is going to be a cakewalk. Large chunks of Saddam Hussein's army of 350,000 men will defect *en masse* to far smaller U.S. forces. The Kurds will prove even more devastating in their offensive than Afghanistan's Northern Alliance. Great popular uprisings will erupt, and the Iraqi people will finish the job.

Army and Marine generals do not believe this nonsense. Neither do veteran Middle East diplomats and career analysts at the State Department. Neither does the CIA. But their skepticism only reinforces the convictions of the neocon hawks driving policy at the Defense Department. They—and their key allies in the State Department and Vice President's office—are basing crucial decisions of war and peace on the assurances of Ahmed Chalabi, head of the Iraqi National Congress, and the Iraqi exiles he sends.

Before a shot has been fired, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his hyper-energetic deputy Paul Wolfowitz are already in a manic state, recreating their proudest moment of a quarter century ago: Team B—the Cold War analytical group set up in 1976 to prove that the cautious policies of détente were wholly inadequate. Now they are using a second Team B to trump every argument against their Iraq policies from within the U.S. government itself.

Rumsfeld pushed for the creation of the original Team B during his first term as secretary of defense. He loaded it with bright young neocons and offered

them their first real taste of power. Wolfowitz, previously toiling in the thankless vineyards of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, was one of Team B's ten charter members. The project's driving force remains Wolfowitz's mentor and closest friend today, Richard Perle, current head of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board.

Team B was their road to the top, though its record was mixed. Its alternate National Intelligence Estimate was proven right on ABM violations, the existence of underground cities, and missile accuracy. The original Team B, however, vastly overestimated the willingness of an exhausted Soviet Union, still demographically scarred by its huge losses in World War II, to fight a full-scale world war with the United States. Wolfowitz has since claimed to the *New York Times*, "he never bought Team B's alarmist contention that the Soviet Union believed it could fight and win a nuclear war." But the Team B experience convinced many of its members, including Perle and Wolfowitz, that they knew better than the rest of the U.S. government.

In the months following 9/11, Wolfowitz found that the intelligence community would not play along with his fixed conception that Saddam was the terrorist mastermind who had given al-Qaeda its marching orders. CIA chief George Tenet took the extraordinary step of bucking his own president by publicly stating that his agency had no conclusive evidence tying Iraq to the attacks. Senators and

congressmen briefed by administration officials confirmed that proof of an al-Qaeda-Baghdad connection was never included in the White House's arguments for regime change.

But this did not stop Wolfowitz. When the U.S. intelligence community refused to produce the links of which he was certain, he and his friends set up their own intelligence assessment operation, a new Team B. Instead of looking for al-Qaeda where it clearly is—safely hunkered down in America's ally Pakistan and protected by the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence agency—Wolfowitz and his new Team B determined to find al-Qaeda where it was not: in Iraq. But despite their best efforts, Team B-2 has been unable to produce any hard evidence actually linking Saddam to the atrocity. The most they found was a meeting between hijacker Mohammed Atta and an Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague five months before the attacks. Czech President Vaclav Havel expresses skepticism that the meeting even took place, and the *New York Times* reports, "American intelligence officials ... believe that [the Iraqi agent] is a low-ranking diplomat of little consequence [and] emphasize that the Iraqi National Congress ... has an agenda and a history of coloring fact to suit its needs."

When the new Team B came up short on conclusive evidence, it turned to arguing that Saddam's regime is a fragile house of cards that will topple with a single shove. The sole source of information to support this assessment did not come from anywhere in the U.S. government, intelligence community, or armed forces. It came only from Chalabi and his fellow INC exiles, who want American soldiers to do their dirty work.

When this scheme meets objection, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz draw on their own favorite in-house experts. The foremost is David Wurmser, Undersecretary

of State John Bolton's top foreign policy advisor, who has publicly advocated "rewarding" the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan with chunks of partitioned Iraq and partitioned Syria. Wurmser's wingman is Harold Rhode, a Wolfowitz protégé who, in a Pentagon meeting, reportedly warned a Saudi diplomat that his country would be brought to heel once America had its way in the Middle East.

Assessments that contradict these favored few are ridiculed or dismissed. In meetings of the Deputies Committee that coordinates U.S. policies between government agencies, Wolfowitz presents Chalabi's raw intelligence as fact. His boss Rumsfeld accepts the same unfiltered data and presents it with equal confidence in the more powerful Principals Committee. Vice President Cheney and his chief of staff I. Lewis Libby, another Wolfowitz protégé, lap it up, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice lacks the personal confidence to challenge the formidable Cheney-Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz axis.

Chalabi's reports, which have generated the stream of confident predictions reported in the mainstream U.S. media from "senior administration officials," were the basis for Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith's wild plan—correctly reported in the *New York Times* and fiercely opposed by the Army's top brass—to drop the 101st Airborne Division into the heart of Baghdad in the hope that resistance would immediately collapse.

The analytical sections of the U.S. Army and Marines have repeatedly warned of the perils of going into Iraq without regional allies and sufficient build-up of ground forces.

The American public remains ignorant of this dire state of affairs, though frank assessments appear in foreign media. Vincent Cannistraro, the widely respected former head of CIA counter-intelligence,

told the London *Guardian*, "Basically, cooked information is working its way into high-level pronouncements and there's a lot of unhappiness about it in intelligence, especially among analysts at the CIA." Cannistraro continued, "CIA assessments are being put aside by the defense department in favour of intelligence they are getting from various Iraqi exiles. Machiavelli warned princes against listening to exiles. Well, that is what is happening now."

Counter-claims notwithstanding, Team B looks intent on rushing to ruin. In the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel's Martin Van Creveld, one of the world's leading military historians, warns that Wolfowitz's war plan is a dangerous gamble, writing that the 100,000-man Iraqi Republican Guard "is said to be intact and ready to fight." He continues, "This is even more true of the 30,000-strong Special Republican Guard." Now suppose that based on Team B's assessments, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz insert 10-15,000 U.S. troops as spearhead forces without sufficient heavy weapons, and the popular uprisings and mass army defections of Chalabi's prediction do not occur? In that case, Van Creveld concludes, the Bush administration would be "risking a defeat as spectacular as the one the French suffered in the War of Indochina at Dien Bien Phu under similar circumstances in 1954."

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu ended a century of European domination in Asia. A repeat performance in the Iraqi Western Desert would similarly shipwreck America's imperial fantasy. It would almost certainly set off a wave of violent anti-American uprisings across the entire Muslim world. Worse, it could damn thousands of young Americans to unnecessary death—all to vindicate the ambitions of a few neocon intellectuals. ■

Martin Sieff is Chief International Analyst for United Press International.

Sin of Omission

When students rail against abortion, the press seems not to hear.

By Mark Gauvreau Judge

JAMES BOWMAN, THE media critic for the *New Criterion*, once noted that liberal bias in the media is not only manifest in how mainstream news outlets cover events but also in what they choose to ignore. Yes, snotty put-downs and downright editorializing appear in the news pages of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, but what about the stories they simply do not cover?

This occurred to me recently when I was visiting the campus of my *alma mater*, the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. CUA is in the heart of Brookland, one of Washington's most scenic and interesting neighborhoods. Brookland, known to some as "Little Rome," is home to over 60 Catholic organizations and orders, including the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception—one of the largest churches in the world—the National Council of Catholic Bishops, the Dominican House of Studies, the John Paul II Cultural Center, Carmelite and Franciscan monasteries, and Trinity College, a small and distinguished Catholic women's college.

It was also the place where some news was made during my visit, although the *Washington Post* and even the *Washington Times* missed it—probably because it happened during the same week as the protests against the IMF, which were being covered every twenty minutes by NPR and the local media. Washington's television reporters

were positively hysterical with anticipation of the protest, which consisted of a couple hundred ill-bathed rich white kids ululating against the capitalist system that afforded them the cars they drove into Washington.

During my visit to CUA, I was walking to the university's Mullen Library when I was brought up short by two lines of graffiti that had been left on the sidewalk:

IT IS NOT SAFE
IT IS NOT RARE

As an alumnus I should not have been surprised that there is still a strong pro-life voice at the university, but still I was brought up short. That kind of 1960s-style activism just was not routine at CUA. It hinted that there may have been a controversy at the school, and I ducked inside the library to get a copy of the *Tower*, the school paper.

In fact, there was something of a fracas going on at the school, and in a world where leftism is *de rigueur* on campuses, it was the kind of man bites dog story that should have filled the campus with reporters. A rock band called Rusted Root had been hired to play at the school, but after the contracts had been signed and checks cashed, it was revealed that the band is a supporter of Planned Parenthood, indeed, that it often gives out Planned Parenthood literature at its shows. Students for Life protested, and the campus was caught in the middle of an intense

debate about what to do. The pages of the *Tower* were filled with tough and thoughtful editorials and letters about the controversy. Many wanted to cancel the concert. "This is a concrete opportunity to reject an awful apathy towards an awful, pervasive reality," wrote senior Terry Prosser, "a concrete opportunity to hold up the virtue of hope in the face of a monster. Hopeless you say? Did the end of slavery look so promising in 1820?"

Michael Tenney, a sophomore and member of the Campus Ministry staff, noted that Rusted Root had already been paid. He then came up with an idea: students with tickets to the show should show up wearing white t-shirts to symbolize their beliefs. "Wear white for life," Tenney wrote. His idea was supported by the 4,400 pink and blue flags that had been planted on the campus as a "Cemetery of the Innocents," a flag to indicate every abortion that happens daily in the United States.

Again, the display attracted no professional reporters. After all, this is not the anti-apartheid Shantytown at Dartmouth. At the Rusted Root concert, there was not a single reporter from any newspaper present. The brouhaha lasted well into the next week, when the *Tower* ran several pages and an editorial on the controversy. The lead editorial actually defended Rusted Root, while most of the letters expressed outrage. It never occurred to the *Times* or the *Post* to do what newspapers in the old days did routinely: send reporters around the city, even—or perhaps especially—to places that seemed very quiet, to see if there was any news to be found.

This was how H.L. Mencken, perhaps the 20th century's greatest newspaper-

man, got his first byline. Mencken was 18 years old in 1899 when he began pestering Max Ways, the editor of the *Baltimore Herald*, for a job. Mencken showed up every night until finally Ways told Mencken to go to Govanstown, then a village north of Baltimore, to see if anything was happening. Mencken traveled through the aftermath of a blizzard to get there, and his description is one of the best passages from his book *Newspaper Days*. Mencken crossed "the glacier of a street" and woke an undertaker to ask for news, but the man had none. Then he went to the pharmacy, where he found "the druggist hugging a red-hot egg-stove behind his colored bottles." The druggist told him the town cop had just left to investigate the robbery of a horse and buggy. Mencken had a story and his first byline. Mencken was frequently sent out on such trips; Ways told him that he knew he had traveled far enough out of Baltimore when he "ran into the reporters from Philadelphia."

In my years at Catholic U I do not recall ever bumping into a reporter from a local paper. Never did I hear some hack say that he was there just to check things out, read the student paper, and see what was going on. These days, if the missed Catholic University story is any example, most reporters, both liberal and conservative, react to an event by scrolling through their rolodexes for the usual suspects. What we got from the *Post* was the same old "protestors fewer than expected" (that is, by the *Post*), President Bush struggling with the war, and the Rolling Stones touring for Keith Richards's 114th birthday. ■

Mark Gauvreau Judge is the author of *If It Ain't Got That Swing and Damn Senators: My Grandfather and Washington's Championship Season*, which will be published next year.

Dean of Liberal Imperialism

Friedman would rather Clinton do the bombing.

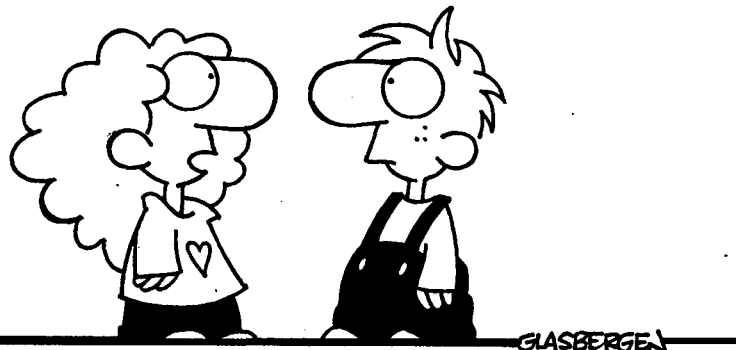
By George Szamuely

NEW YORK TIMES columnist Thomas L. Friedman's journalistic mission is to lead the massed ranks of the uninitiated toward appreciation of the *diktats* of the powers that be. He once exulted, "The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies to flourish is called the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps."

Such selflessness rarely goes unrewarded. In addition to his three Pulitzer Prizes, he has been showered with prestigious speaking engagements, dinners with important government officials, and invitations to international soirees with the rich and powerful. What makes Friedman so appealing to them is his obsessive longing to see U.S. armed force deployed massively and brutally against some hapless country combined with a vociferous espousal of humanitarianism. He has never come across a country that he didn't want B-52s to knock some sense into. During the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia, he raged with bloodlust, "It should be lights out in Bel-

grade: Every power grid, water pipe, bridge, road and war-related factory has to be targeted. Like it or not, we are at war with the Serbian nation ... and the stakes have to be very clear: Every week you ravage Kosovo is another decade we will set your country back by pulverizing you. You want 1950? We can do 1950. You want 1389? We can do 1389 too."

Friedman is one of those imperial apologists who prefers to see the empire administered by Clintonites rather than Bushies. Republicans generate far greater opposition among European liberals than Democrats. Thus the prestige of the U.S. empire falls under Republican administrations. On a recent trip to Germany, Friedman had the delicate task of instructing his listeners to direct their anger at the U.S. toward the administration of George W. Bush. The Germans had just re-elected Social Democratic leader Gerhard Schroeder, who, during the campaign, had explicitly ruled out taking part in an attack on Iraq under any conditions. "What is most shocking about the German election," Friedman wrote, "is not how the Chancellor ran against America, it's how



"I'm not sure if I'm gay or straight. What's its called if you only sleep with Teddy bears?"

popular that theme was here. Two things are feeding this. One is the new anti-Americanism, a blend of jealousy and resentment of America's overwhelming economic and military power....The other is the new anti-Bushism—resentment of the often contemptuous, unilateralist, anti-green instincts of the Bush team." Friedman is distinguishing here between good and bad anti-Americanism. "Anti-Bushism" is OK, but "jealousy and resentment of America's overwhelming economic and military power" is out of the question. However, he admonished the Germans, "some things are true even if a Texas cowboy believes them. I'm still not sure what the right way is to handle Iraq, but I am sure that ruling out war there, under any conditions...is wrong."

Friedman's hesitation is a little surprising. He had never before expressed doubts about Iraq. On Feb. 6, 1998, he urged, "bombing Iraq, over and over and over again, until either Saddam says uncle, and agrees to let the United Nations back in on U.S. terms, or the Iraqi people eliminate him." Two weeks later he asserted, "[T]he U.S. has to make clear to Iraq and U.S. allies that if there is any violation America will use force, without negotiation, hesitation or U.N. approval." On Jan. 19, 1999, he fumed, "Take steps to have Saddam declared a war criminal by the United Nations. Blow up a different power station in Iraq every week, so no one knows when the lights will go off. Use every provocation by Saddam to blow up another Iraqi general's home." A destroyed power station means no incubators for babies and no refrigerators to store blood or food. Who cares? It's all Saddam's fault anyway.

So Friedman knows exactly what to do with Iraq. It is just that he wants Clinton, or someone like him, to do it. In a follow-up column he raved, "Clinton ... was swarmed as Germans clamored to

see, hear or shake hands with him. Elvis was in the house ... Bill Clinton is viewed by the world as the epitome of American optimism ... And the Bush team...strike the world as cynical pessimists who believe only in power politics....[O]ptimism about human nature and its commitment to the rule of law, not just power, is the engine of the modern West. It is also a huge source of U.S. strength and appeal."

Friedman's explanations are, to say the least, fanciful. While he was president, Clinton was not exactly a German pin-up boy. Germans did not enjoy being bullied into bombing Yugoslavia, not to mention irritants like the idea of the 30-meter cordon around the U.S. embassy in Berlin, disrupting the city's traffic and complicating access to the Brandenburg Gate, or Clinton's veto of Germany's nominee to head the IMF.

While Friedman pontificates happily about nebulous issues like "optimism" or "pessimism," he scrupulously avoids one very sore point in European-American relations: America's unconditional support for Israeli policies in the occupied territories. He revealed his real feelings about the Europeans in a May 15 column this year: "Yes, yes, many Europeans really do just want an end to the Israeli occupation, but the anti-Semitism coming out of Europe today suggests that deep down some Europeans want a lot more: They want Mr. Sharon to commit a massacre against Palestinians... so that the Europeans can finally get the guilt of the Holocaust off their backs and be able to shout: 'Look at these Jews, they're worse than we were!'" Though Friedman identifies himself with the ruling global elites, when it comes to Israel he doesn't seem to care that it's causing a bitter rift among them. ■

George Szamuely is a writer in New York City.

MOVING?

Attach your address label, write your new address below, and send to:

The American Conservative
Subscription Department
PO Box 10829
Riverton, NJ 08076-6229

Attach address label here:

(Important: please allow six weeks for address change)

(please print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Date of change _____

- ☐ Renew my subscription for a full year (24 issues) for \$49.97.
- ☐ Enter a new subscription for a full year (24 issues) for \$49.97
- ☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later
- ☐ At various times AC makes its mailing list available to other organizations. If you prefer that your name not be rented, please check here.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[Frida]

Painting the Town Red

By Steve Sailer

LOS ANGELES—In the middle of the 20th century, no Mexican bulked larger on the global stage than the artist Diego Rivera. When not painting his titanic murals of the struggling poor, this Falstaffian 300-pounder divided his time between the Communist Party and café society parties.

Today, though, the art world cares little for pictures of suffering workers and peasants, so Rivera is largely overshadowed by his diminutive wife Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), the unbrowed self-portraitist whose life-long love affair with herself foreshadowed our Age of Madonna.

Kahlo was at least Rivera's equal as a fashionable hedonist. She slept with innumerable celebrities of both sexes, including Lenin's chief henchman Leon Trotsky, whom Rivera had invited to hole up from Stalin's wrath in their fortress-like home. Yet, soon after Trotsky's 1940 murder by a Soviet agent, Rivera and Kahlo were pleading to be readmitted to Mexico's arch-Stalinist Communist Party.

Kahlo boasted, "I was a member of the party before I met Diego and I think I am a better communist than he is or ever will be." One of her last paintings was entitled "Stalin and I." Still, her devotion to the toiling masses didn't extend much beyond dressing up in

drop-dead Ballet Folklórico-style costumes for many of her 200 self-portraits.

Mexico's greatest poet, the Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz, used the examples of Rivera and Kahlo to ask whether someone could be both a great artist and "a despicable cur." Paz answered, "Yes."

As an appealing alternative to overly theoretical European art movements, Rivera suggested his wife study the *retablos*—folk religious paintings on small metal sheets. She used bright Mexican colors, a slightly incompetent drawing style that looked naïve and cute, and lots of fun-to-decode fantasy symbols emphasizing her own martyrdom. In "Little Deer," she painted her face on a stag that has been pierced, like a four-legged St. Sebastian, by nine arrows, which represent her husband's nine most intolerable infidelities.

By painting herself over and over with the same baleful expression, she turned herself into her own logo. Now, when the public has learned to appreciate brilliant marketing ploys, she's earned a cult of personality. In 2001, the U.S. Post Office made this America-hating Stalinist the first Hispanic woman to have her own stamp.

Kahlo's popularity has also been fueled by her victimhood. Polio withered one leg and in a horrendous trolley crash at age 18 she was impaled upon a metal pole. She endured more than 30 operations, although some scholars believe certain of her surgeries were medically unnecessary, but were instead feminine wiles intended to keep her husband from straying.

Further, as a disabled bisexual Hispanic woman, she's perfect for the era of multiculturalism. Indeed, the soap opera behind the making of "Frida" was suffused with identity politics. Originally, Laura San Giacomo (now of TV's

"Just Shoot Me"), who looks much like the self-portraitist, was on board. Then, Madonna (who, not surprisingly, collects Kahlo's paintings) wanted to play her. Both Italian-American actresses, however, were blackballed by protests by Latina actresses. Later, Jennifer Lopez, a New York-born Puerto Rican, threw her hat into the ring.

Eventually, Salma Hayek, the hourglass-shaped Mexican actress best known for "The Wild Wild West," assembled the winning project. Their close resemblance is probably helped by Kahlo having been half-Mexican and half-Jewish, while Hayek is half-Mexican and half-Lebanese. (British actor Alfred Molina, who is terrific as Rivera, has been the subject of protests for not being Mexican.)

Julie Taymor, the celebrated creator of the stage version of "The Lion King," directed. Taymor might have the potential to become the most visually talented woman director since Hitler's cinematic accomplice, Leni Riefenstahl, who turned 100 in August. Still, Taymor's gifts at present are more static than dynamic.

Watching Hayek, one of the world's loveliest women, wear gorgeous dresses in colorful sets art directed by a near-genius makes "Frida" awfully easy on the eyes. Hayek and Taymor somewhat underplay Kahlo's physical suffering, focusing more on her energy, spunk, and almost random lustfulness.

The script whitewashes Kahlo's political and personal sins, but no more than you'd expect. Like most biopics that stick closer to the facts than did "A Beautiful Mind," "Frida" doesn't build much dramatic momentum.

Still, awkward biopics often raise more interesting questions than slick fiction. For example, why did so many self-indulgent artists such as Kahlo and

Rivera strive to spread totalitarianism? The ascetic Lenin and Stalin wouldn't fit in well at their kind of parties.

By declaring themselves revolutionaries, however, artistic libertines could blame all the pain they caused the people who loved them on bourgeois society. Come the revolution, their true saintliness could finally manifest itself.

Being a communist meant never having to say you're sorry. ■

Rated a hard "R" for lots of sexuality/nudity and language.
Copyright © 2002 United Press International

BOOKS

[*The Emerging Democratic Majority*, John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira, Scribner, 224 pages]

Left Demography

By Paul Gottfried

POLITICAL JUNKIES of my generation should recall *The Emerging Republican Majority*, that provocative investigation of electoral patterns that journalist Kevin Phillips brought out in the wake of the Goldwater debacle of 1964. According to Phillips, the GOP could still re-emerge as a majority party, if it put together a coalition of disaffected blue collar ethnic Democrats, Sun Belt retirees, and Southern whites who were unhappy with the course of the civil rights movement. Although this strategy worked for a time, albeit mostly as electoral propaganda, it failed to take into account what were still imponderables in the mid-sixties: the effects of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a massive influx of Central Americans into the West and Southwest, the unbreakable Democratic loyalties of the Jewish and other elderly, and the leftward turn of white female voters under the impact of feminist ideology. Now Judis and Teixeira are offering *their* electoral prediction and arguing that the Democrats, really the

left-wing of the Democratic Party, will achieve national dominance in the decades ahead. Although written with a transparent ideological goal, this work is as worthy of consideration as that of Phillips, to whom the authors make numerous respectful references.

Judis and Teixeira point to electoral trends that at least for the present are continuing. Unless dramatic reversals occur for unforeseen reasons, the overwhelming majority of blacks, non-Cuban Hispanics, and Jews will go on voting Democratic. Moreover, because of the leftward movement of educated women on social issues, even within Republican ranks, the soccer mom and the female professional concerned about her reproductive rights and a persistent "glass ceiling" will remain targets of electoral persuasion—identified with the Left. The authors present a stark contrast between the shrinking rural base of the Republicans and the urban-suburban bastions of the rising Democrats, full of minorities, liberated professional women, and "ideopolis" regions, bubbling with liberal intellectuality.

Much of this analysis makes sense, even if it is damaged by the use of double standards and gross exaggerations concerning the Republicans playing the race card. The authors have good reason to think that, barring unexpected crises, an electoral tide is moving in their direction. The questions to be posed are whether these trends are irreversible and whether Republican politicians and their advisors have not done something dumb to contribute to their present disadvantage. The answer to question one is "not necessarily" and to question two "big time."

There is no necessary reason to assume that the current gender gap will stay the same or continue to increase. Although women, all things being equal, tend to be more emotional and more personal about politics than men, revealing behavioral differences that the Harvard psychologist Laurence Kohlberg spent decades documenting, one cannot be sure that this tendency will result in politically correct choices

in every case. Women in the past were more conservative voters than men—and even helped keep France out of the hands of the Communists following World War II, though the Communists had been in the forefront of extending the franchise to women. Most white Protestant women in the U.S. still vote Republican, even if they have moved generally to the left of their male counterparts. While Judis and Teixeira cite obvious changes in the self-image of American and other Western women, one should not treat present trends as permanent ones.

But the major problem of Republican strategists and politicians is of a different kind, namely imagining that those trends Judis and Teixeira explore will disappear once Republicans have reached out far enough to the Left. As a former graduate student of mine turned historian put it, there are two national parties, the real Democrats and the wannabe Democrats, the latter of which try to impersonate the opposition. Contrary to what *The Emerging Democratic Majority* suggests, the Republicans do not serve right-wing constituencies, except for occasionally throwing bones to corporate friends. In the presidential debates, George W. Bush could not bring himself to say that he opposed racial and gender quotas. Instead he talked enthusiastically about "affirmative access." In return for less than ten percent of the black vote, as Steve Sailer showed in commentaries

The American Conservative makes the perfect Christmas gift for a friend, loved one, or recovering neocon.

www.amconmag.com

1-800-579-6148

on VDARE.com after the 2000 election, Bush surrendered millions of white male voters, many of whom had voted for his father in 1992 but resented his waffling.

It is also hard to find the value in the way the Republican National Committee and most Republican politicians treat immigration. To speak of this blunder, which Judis and Teixeira properly celebrate as their kind of diversity, and which will soon cost the Republican Party both congressional and presidential races in key states, as "Hispanic outreach" brings to mind the Saturday Night Live skit Republican presidential candidate who boasts about his "strategy." Studies by, among others, Steve Sailer, John O'Sullivan, and Peter Brimelow conclude that Republicans may be doomed to permanent minority status if Hispanic immigration is allowed to continue at its present rate. Yet, the Republicans, led by Karl Rove and the *Wall Street Journal*, advocate this road to disaster, while Rove has raged against the idea of recruiting Republican voters from among those who oppose immigration, which may by now be a majority of Americans. Equally silly have been the Republican efforts to court Jewish votes by fawning on the Zionist Right. Bob Dole's attempt to outdo the Israeli Right in his ill-fated

presidential campaign of 1996 by bashing the Palestinians, netted him less than 20 percent of the Jewish vote. It also helped enhance his opportunistic image after he had tried to reach out to every designated victim group, including gays. (Stanley Renshon published an eye-opening essay on Dole's outreach and the problem of vacuous politics in the September/October 2000 edition of *Society*.)

Although one can differ about the causes of this grotesque behavior, be it the leftist media, congenital stupidity, or WASP social guilt, it is something Republicans have done to themselves. Having voted for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 overwhelmingly and having introduced affirmative action programs under Nixon, the GOP has done at least as much as its Democratic opponents to win black votes. Perhaps it can now start catering to the Middle Americans who have voted Republican—or to the white male Americans who have grown disgusted with Republican opportunism masked as outreach. Let Republican strategists worry about their own base for a change, lest all of it stays home on election day. And let them stop thinking that they are morally reprehensible when they look for voters on the Right. Needless to say, the bogus Right will join the Left in decrying Republican candidates who come out

against immigration; and yes, journalist David Broder will predictably describe any Republican as a racist, as he did Senator Helms for the hundredth time last year, who calls attention to the set-asides received by a black opponent. (Judis and Teixeira, by the way, complain bitterly about the resort to "racial wedge issues" among Republican candidates who notice violent crime during their campaigns.) But those

are the necessarily divisive things that a competitive national party will have to face as it builds a right-of-center constituency. Only once this course has been tried and failed will the Judis-Teixeira Democratic majority seem historically inevitable. ■

Paul Gottfried is the author of Multiculturalism and the Politics of Guilt: Toward a Secular Theocracy and professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania.

[No Way to Treat a First Lady, Christopher Buckley, Random House, 288 pages]

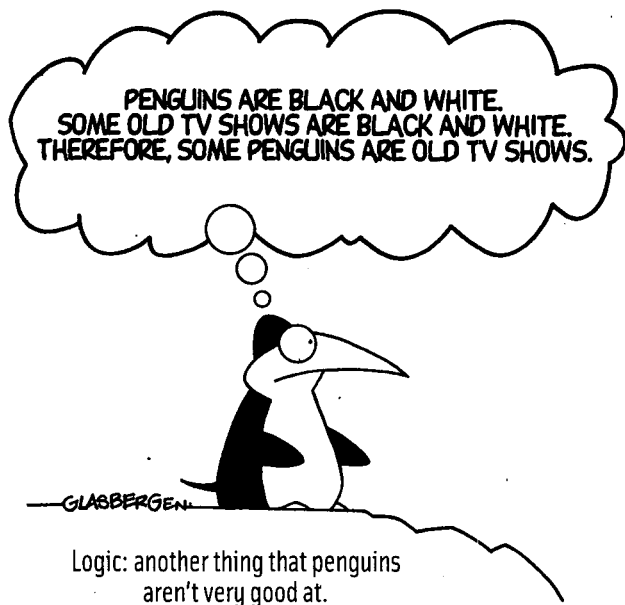
Will She Get a Pearl Necklace?

By E. F. Ulmann

CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY is the son of conservative patriarch William F. Buckley Jr. He is a smooth man in the same way that his father is a hairy, craggy man. Having been a speechwriter for President Bush the Elder, he knows the layout of the White House and the Washington form on how the game is played and who the players are. He is a former managing editor of *Esquire*, and his current day job is editor of *Forbes* FYI. His latest book (his eighth) is going to make a bang-up movie, a Washington satire better than "Wag the Dog."

As they say in Hollywood, here's the pitch. Before the titles roll, the film opens *in medias res*. The scene is the White House Lincoln bedroom. The President of the United States is conducting vigorous, headboard-banging "bilateral relations" with a Barbra Streisand type. How do we know it's the President? Because she cannot resist inserting a "Mr. President" into the "Oh, baby, baby, baby"s. And because he orders her not to call him that "while Congress is in session."

Pretty good start wouldn't you say? I



don't know about you, but I like a little humor in the hay, a laugh or two with my lechery. Perhaps you sophisticates may be jaded by the spectacle of the president hosting horizontal happy hours in the White House. In this case, however, as we later learn, President Kenneth Kemble MacMann, although a former state governor like some of his predecessors, is a Vietnam War hero, not a draft-dodger. As the encounter reaches its climax, a pan of the camera to the portrait over the mantle of our great Civil War president might add a nice touch of irony.

It is after 2:00 a.m. when the President slips back into the First Bedroom. Elizabeth Tyler MacMann, the knockout First Lady (think Catherine Zeta-Jones) hears the click of the opening door. "She knew," writes Buckley, "Knew instantly, even in the dark. No surer radar than a wife's intuition has been invented." She clicks on the lights. He reacts "like any creature of the night—raccoon, cockroach—suddenly bathed in unwelcome light."

"Iraq," sighs the President, rolling his eyes.

Go black. Roll titles.

Fade in. It is morning. A maid brings the First Couple their breakfast in bed. She says to the First Lady, softly but with alarm, that the president's eyes and mouth are wide open and he is looking awfully still. He has a bump on his head is colder than a smelt. Track to a silver spittoon on its side in a corner of the room.

Well, enough of this screenplay stuff. I'm sure that Christopher Buckley will do a fine job of it himself. He is a splendid writer of dialogue. It can go on for a page or so without a "he said, she said," and the reader is never in doubt as to the speaker. Believable, realistic dialogue with the fits, starts, and interjections of everyday conversation, was first introduced into the humorous novel, in the 18th century, by Lawrence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*. Buckley is a worthy descendant of Sterne, which for reasons known to him, I think he would take as a compliment.

Back to the narrative. As the evidence will later show, the lump on the president's forehead bears the hallmark of Paul Revere, silversmith, who wrought the six-pound, ten-ounce heirloom spittoon that is lying nearby on the floor.

As the Secret Service guards will later testify, a boisterous argument had followed the president's return to the bedroom.

The discovery of the cooled MacMann results in the Attorney General of the United States charging his wife with the capital crime of assassinating the president.

This, then, is the set-up. There have been real White House rumors of lamp-tossing and bumps on the head after choking on a pretzel, but here we have a situation in which the *dénouement* is actually fatal.

Mrs. MacMann, "Lady Bethmac" in the tabloids after her ruthless treatment of staff, is not a popular figure. It appears that the prosecution will have a slam-dunk case and that the First Lady is fated to get a pearl necklace—one fashioned into a noose like that which artfully decorates the dust jacket of Buckley's book.

Not so fast. Enter counsel for the defense: Boyce "Shameless" Baylor, Beth's dumped fiancé from their law school days twenty-five years ago. He is the highest paid lawyer in the country, first to bill \$1000 an hour, and notorious for his win-at-any-cost, successful defenses of a number of scoundrels. Think of Jack Nicholson as a handsome David Boies.

Of Boies David Margolick has written, "To understand David, you have to understand that you may not understand him." Buckley gets the irony down perfectly. "The last thing I want to know from my clients is did they do it," says Baylor, adding later, "The truth has no place in a court of law."

From here the book sparkles off to a riveting, often hilarious, courtroom drama. It is the "Trial of the Millennium," one that enraptures more than a billion television viewers around the world. It features a cast of characters that will be

readily identifiable to those with knowledge of the recent trials of merely the century and the gallery of pundits who provide the play-by-play.

There is the annoying assistant attorney general, a Marcia Clark type, who leads the prosecution. A few characters reappear from Buckley's earlier novels. There is John O. Banion, syndicated columnist and figure on the *Capital Bang* television show, who first appeared in *Little Green Men* and spinmeister Nick Naylor who repped the tobacco industry in *Thank You for Smoking*. I am saddened to report, however, that one of my favorite Buckley characters, Karl Kuntmore, the techno-military thriller writer from *Little Green Men* does not make an appearance. This anomaly is more than offset, however, by the odious Alan Crudmore, lead counsel in the J.J. Bronco case, who "had gotten acquitted some of the most loathsome human beings on the planet," and who tries to second-guess Boyce Baylor on this one. There will be no prizes for guessing who this is. Buckley does a great job of satirizing this legal figure who is well known for being a long way from hating himself, and frankly, deserves some sending up.

Some forty years ago Michael Flanders (*At the Drop of a Hat*) spotted satire squatting "hoof in mouth under every bush." It was apparently so popular that Flanders and Swann would satirize satire itself. "The purpose of satire," said Flanders, is to strip off the veneer of comforting illusion and cozy half-truth. And our job, as I see it, is to put it back in."

Today there is a dearth of satire, which makes Buckley's book so welcome. In the past some critics have accused him of being light on plot, but that is not the case in this novel. The conclusion is artful and the surprise ending well conceived. ■

E.F. Ulmann wrote the Classicus features for New York Press and, as Corinthus, writes the book column for Quest magazine.

On the Left Bank

Driving to Provincetown with Scott McConnell and Kara Hopkins to interview Norman Mailer brought back memories. Getting famous writers to say yes is not

always easy. In the autumn of 1972, I was living in Paris, and William Buckley suggested I interview expatriate American writers like James Jones and Irwin Shaw for *National Review*. I was excited by the idea and went to work immediately. I rang James Jones from my room at the Plaza-Athenee, where I was living in great comfort after my *al fresco* stay in Hue, Vietnam the previous spring. Jones answered the telephone himself, and the conversation went something like this:

Me: Hello, Mr. Jones, my name is Taki Theodoracopulos. I write for *NR* and would very much like to interview you.

JJ: I am sorry, but I do not give interviews.

Me: This is very bad news because I'm a struggling writer who has just returned from Nam and needs to feed two children and a wife.

JJ: Well, we are all struggling writers, what can I say?

Me: Some more than others. But the kids gotta eat.

JJ: What did you say your name was and who do you write for?

Me: Taki Theodoracopulos, and it's *National Review*, the William F. Buckley Jr. conservative fortnightly.

JJ: You poor bastard. You better come around.

And around I went, to his beautiful house on the Left Bank, where he and

his wife Gloria treated me with great kindness and generosity of spirit. Jones revealed to me that he'd had it with Paris. "I'm going back to my roots in the good old U.S.A. Paris is really yesterday. Like Papa said, 'Paris is for the young ...'" He pointed out that the City of Lights had been irreparably damaged by the modern architecture sprouting all over the place and that the people had lost some of their spirit for the arts and literature. "The mindset is now that of Wall Street, so why settle for second best?"

A butler served us a wonderful lunch, Jones encouraging me to have seconds and thirds, obviously hoping to fatten me up before I returned to a diet of bread and beans. We talked about writing. *Time* magazine had just published some rubbish about how Irwin Shaw and Jones were *passé* because they were simple storytellers. "Yes," said Jones, "both Irwin and I write books that have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and we try to entertain our readers, not confuse them." This was before deconstructionism and magic realism had muddled the issue of literature. Still, we found plenty of ammunition against the modernists. Having taken copious notes, I bade James and Gloria *adieu* and thanked them profusely. I had spent eight hours with them, but it felt like much less. Jones looked awfully uncomfortable as I was leaving. But Gloria whispered something to him, we shook hands, and I left. I found out later that he wanted to slip me a few francs, but his wife thought I might be insulted by it.

Now comes the good part, as told to me by Irwin Shaw years later. Two weeks after my interview with James Jones, he and Irwin and their wives were dining in a bistro when the *Time* magazine article came up in conversation. Irwin was steamed up about it. "Who the hell are these no-talents to be passing judgment on us?" He then made a few choice remarks about critics and the press in general. James tried to calm him down. "Don't forget, we're quite fortunate. I had a kid come and see me recently, and he has a family to support on the lousy \$8,000 per year that Bill Buckley pays him. He had a long, strange name, a Greek one."

"That's funny," said Shaw, "I know somebody like that. His name is Taki Theodoracopulos."

"Yeah, that's him," said Jones.

"Well," said Irwin, "Taki is a friend of mine, is not married, has no kids, writes the occasional article for *NR*, and in case you're interested, I'm going to be on his yacht in the south of France next week."

"Son of a bitch," spluttered Jones, "I've been conned by a fascist."

Years later, at a Fourth of July party in Easthampton, Irwin couldn't stop chuckling about it. James Jones had passed away by then, as Irwin would soon afterwards, but he went on and on about it, actually congratulating me for having tugged at James's heartstrings. "You must have known that James was a softie underneath, didn't you?"

Well, I didn't, but successful, tough-guy writers like Jones are more often than not eager to help those whose talents don't match their own. Shaw was also like that, as is Norman Mailer. At least this time I didn't need to pretend I

was broke with children and a wife to feed. Norman knows my family, and his son Michael has cruised on my boat. Honesty, after all, is by far the best policy, but sometimes it doesn't get you the interview you desperately need.

■
I greatly enjoyed the election results. I have always believed that President George W. Bush is a very smart and decent man whom the increasingly hysterical media elite have tried to paint as an idiot.

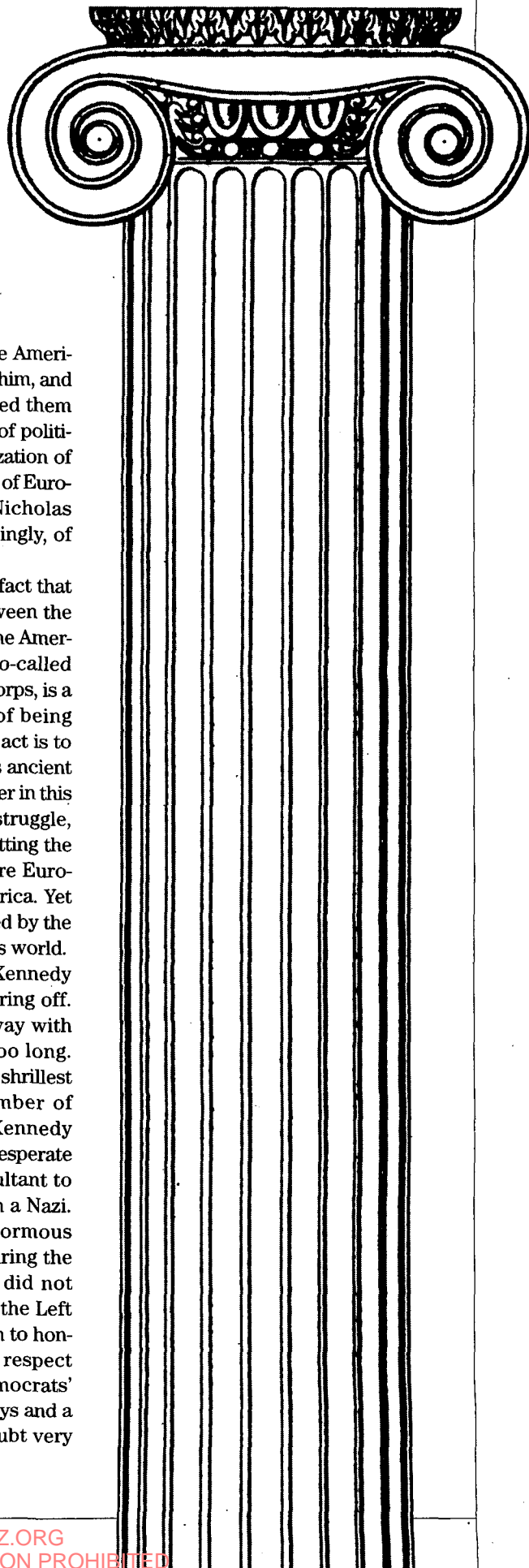
There is a wonderful moment in the film "Patton," when Rommel's commanders try to convince him that if the Allied attack comes, he will only have to face George Patton and the Americans. "They are nothing, Herr General." Rommel, a wise and great commander knew better. "Why do you say this? He has never lost."

Ditto with George W. He has lost only once. And that was early on. He is the only president with an MBA, a successful baseball team owner and oil man despite the mud which is constantly being flung at his achievements by class warriors like the egregious Paul Krugman of the *New York Times*. (Krudman would be a more apt name). Krudman's hatred for the president borders on obsession. I am not a pop psychologist, but this obsession could have something to do with bed-wetting, strange sexual fantasies, or having been molested by extra large rabbits when young. Krudman will not accept George W. Bush as president. He blames Jewish retirees who voted for Pat Buchanan, right-wing pundits working for non-tax-paying corporations, leaflet distributors in minority districts, extra large rabbits nibbling away at Democratic ballots ... anything

and anyone but the fact that the American people like George W, trust him, and voted for those George W. asked them to. Needless to say, the venom of political discourse "and this ghetto-ization of information is sadly reminiscent of European politics," according to Nicholas Kristof, also, however surprisingly, of the *New York Times*.

Sad though it may be, it is a fact that there's a great disconnect between the Beltway liberal-Left elites and the American people. Helen Thomas, so-called dean of the Washington press corps, is a case in point. Thomas' idea of being forced to commit an unnatural act is to accept a Republican victory. As ancient as she is, she has not grown wiser in this her 18th century or so. Class struggle, scare tactics against the old, pitting the poor against the rich—these are European tricks not worthy of America. Yet these are the weapons employed by the Kennedys and Krugmans of this world.

The good news is that the Kennedy magic seems to be finally wearing off. The Kennedys have gotten away with bluster and bullying for far too long. Patrick Kennedy has to be the shrillest as well as the dumbest member of Congress, just as Kathleen Kennedy Townsend had to be the most desperate candidate, allowing her consultant to call the victorious Bob Ehrlich a Nazi. Watching Ted Kennedy's enormous jowls grinning with delight during the Wellstone funeral obviously did not help. The hate-filled vitriol of the Left did not work this time. A return to honest debate marked by mutual respect and civility should be the Democrats' goal in future, but with Kennedys and a Clinton still in Congress, I doubt very much it will be. ■



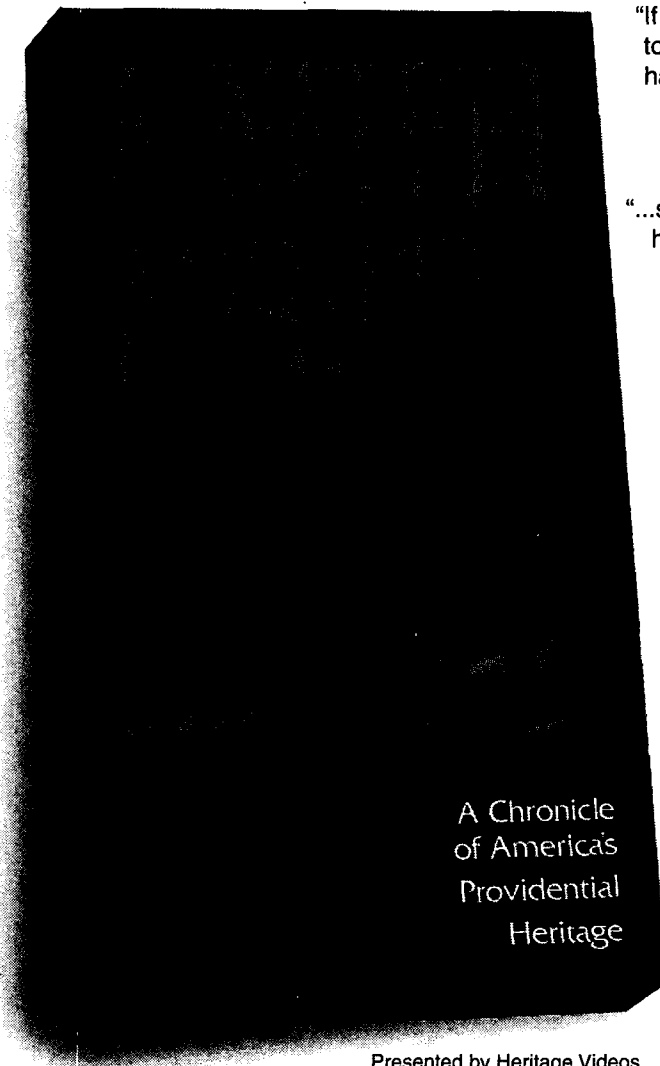
The true story of how God's sovereign hand guided the founders of America.

This documentary takes you on a journey...from Christopher Columbus to Jamestown...from Valley Forge to the Constitutional Convention...from the Civil War to the Industrial Revolution...from the first World War to the Stock Market Crash...from FDR to the present.

Our journey will give a basic grasp of God's sovereign hand behind the history of our nation, which our founding fathers so clearly understood.

The result of this journey will give us a better understanding of where America is today, how she arrived here, and where she must turn at this critical hour.

For as Thomas Jefferson once asked, "Can the liberties of a nation be secure, when we have removed the conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?"



Presented by Heritage Videos
Running time 90 minutes

"If every American took the time to view *A Nation Adrift*, it would have a history-changing impact on our nation's course."

Howard Phillips, Chairman
U.S. Taxpayers Alliance

"...should be viewed in churches, homes and schools across the nation. This video illustrates how the forces of humanism have attacked America's foundation of faith..."

Don Wildmon, President
American Family Association

"*A Nation Adrift* is splendid. With its vital and timely message to Americans, its excellent production techniques, and its interest holding approach, I expect it to have a major impact on audiences wherever it is shown."

D. James Kennedy, Ph.D.
Coral Ridge Ministries

"...an excellent video for anyone wanting to know the truth about the rich history and heritage of this nation."

It provides a wonderful examination of how we got to where we are today."

Jim Woodell, Vice President
Concerned Women for America

A NATION ADRIFT is one of the most extraordinary documentaries ever produced. This amazing fact-based journey through our nation's providential heritage is both upbeat and eye opening and is an excellent addition to any video collection.

TO ORDER PLEASE CALL
(800) 201-7892, ext.22
ONLY \$19.95 plus shipping & handling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED